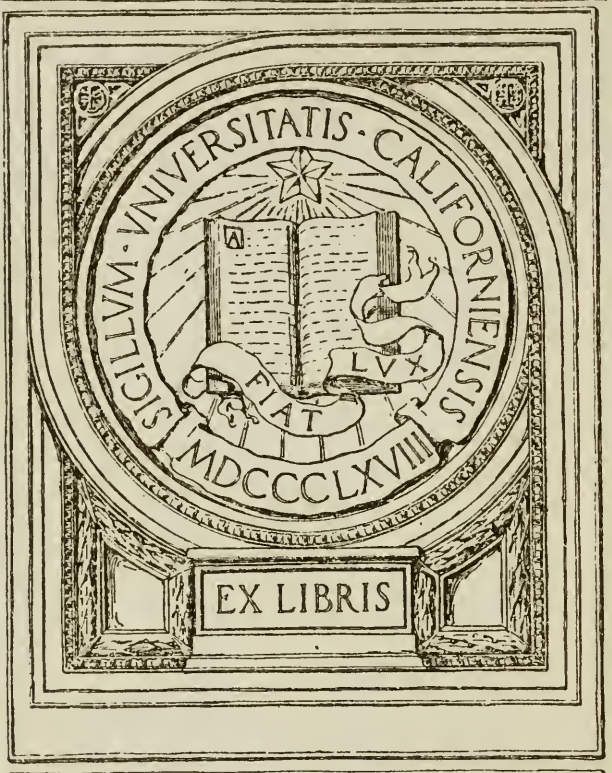
UC-NRLF
B 4 090 974

GIFT OF
EDWARD C. FARNSWORTH



UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA

THREE GREAT EPOCH-MAKERS IN MUSIC

TO THE MEMORY OF

MY TEACHER AND FRIEND

HERMANN KOTZSCHMAR

THAT RIPE MUSICIAN

WHOSE MATURE JUDGMENT HAS MUCH

STRENGTHENED MY OWN

CONVICTIONS

THESE PAGES ARE DEDICATED

Three Great Epoch-Makers in Music

BY

EDWARD CLARENCE FARNSWORTH

PORTLAND
SMITH & SALE, PRINTERS
MDCCCCXII

F3

COPYRIGHT 1912
BY
EDWARD CLARENCE FARNSWORTH

CONTENTS

	PAGE
PREFACE	vii
JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH	3
FREDERIC CHOPIN	33
RICHARD STRAUSS AND THE ART OF SOUND .	81

282332

PREFACE

BEARING in mind Emerson's saying that every action admits of being outdone, and around every circle another may be drawn, we none the less believe that a comparison of Sebastian Bach, Frederic Chopin and Richard Strauss, will show that, because of excellences peculiar to his day, and also individual excellences, no one of these three epoch-makers wholly outdoes, wholly encircles either of the others. Rather is he a link of a chain in which Beethoven, Wagner, and certain others are indispensable.

That chain had beginning in the remote past, but, because inadequate, many early links are now broken. Of musicians prior to Bach, Gregory and Palestrina alone have endured the strain of time. The inadequacy of the old, true of not another art, proves music to be virtually an achievement of the last two and one-half centuries. This brief term, a mere fraction of that which must be allowed to certain of the sister arts, argues for music a very considerable period of future development.

Comparison of the Gregorian Chants with the Wagnerian scores may bring doubt upon this statement, but, since the advent of Richard Strauss, it seems probable that the musician of the future will smile at the ideals of our contemporary composers. What were the tendencies whose centering in one master mind produced the great classical beginnings of modern music, we would show in our estimate of Bach. The tendencies eventuating in the free style of the romanticist, and the abandon of the ultra school, we would indicate in our estimate of Chopin. And, because of present tendencies, what direction tonal development will yet take, we shall endeavor to ascertain in our estimate of Richard Strauss.

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

JOHANN SEBASTIAN BACH

I

FAR down the vista of history stands the Grecian Homer, unique, and, save for Hesiod, alone amidst the memorable years. Alone we say, but from the view-point of his contemporaries was visible in the background — even to the dim horizon of civilization — many an eminence inferior only when compared with that colossal peak of Ionic song. To every philologist, to every classical scholar, the development and finish of the Homeric hexameter argues convincingly a poetical ancestry of which the Iliad and the Odyssey are culmination.

The chiselled achievements of Phidias, and whatsoever else extant of Attic sculpture, attest the attained perfection of an art in whose day of puerility the primitive cave-dweller, with a bit of broken flint, idly scratched upon the bones of his prey, crude semblance of man, animal, fish, reptile and bird. The worthiest triumphs of Renaissance painting are traceable to the cruel, warlike impulse of the savage daubing himself to hideousness with earthy pigments and the red juice of ripened berries. The grand creations of the German tone-builders were evolved from the battle-yells of aboriginal tribes.

Thus in Earth's purest, highest things is exemplified the law whereby the noble somehow emerged from the ignoble like the sweet and tinted flower rooted in the unsavory compost: whereby also the formative mind of man itself gained scope and symmetry, not through sudden and strenuous exercise, but in a way comparable to the sphering and solidifying and upbuilding of a planet, in fact, that infinitely gradual and orderly process which Nature in her wisdom has everywhere counterparted, as when she evolved these modern years from the countless, non-achieving ages of unrecorded savagery; ages repulsive with the dominant, brute passions of men.

Thus, in view of the foregoing, it may with assurance be admitted that every genius is endowed not only by the immediate, gracious gift of God, but also by the accumulated bequeathings of every predecessor in the same domain of usefulness.

Well we know that while the puny efforts of the ordinary individual ripple but for an instant some little surface of the vast ocean of mortal life, others there be, centers of mental and spiritual power at once wide-reaching, deep-sounding, and long-enduring. Always in touch with unseen angel hands, these are verily the world's immortals co-working with the Divine Law of human progress. Deathless are they in deed and name; the prophet of Truth, the priest of God, the

patriot Warrior, the incorruptible Statesman, the wise Ruler, the inspired Artist and the uplifted Singer.

Our immediate purpose bids us choose from this noble company; let us look somewhat into the dedicated life of Johann Sebastian Bach; let us inquire briefly into the musical mission of one of the chief promoters of human enlightenment.

At cursory glance, the solid and abiding work of Bach may be called the bed-rock, the basic strata, whereon rests our musical world of this present. But, remembering the Flemish Fuguists and their predecessors, the Canon writers of the Gotho-Belgic school, and, earlier, the Parisian developers of the primitive counterpoint originating in French Flanders during the tenth century, we discover other strata underlying and upholding the Passion Music, the Sacred Cantatas, and the instrumental Preludes and Fugues. Nor need this discovery belittle our estimate of Bach; it but illustrates the dependence of the human mind, unstable without the foundation and buttress of other minds. Shakespeare himself was largely the product of exceptional conditions, the rich flower of the Elizabethan environment, the chief dramatic poet, the genius most gifted, among an unusually gifted group of notables.

The Flemish school of composition, which, at the advent of Bach, had now flourished for at least a century and a half, was most fortunate in one of its

earliest pupils, Palestrina, who, infusing into its abundant learning the spirit of Genius, forthwith evolved for his Italy a noble and devout school of sacred music. But, despite the unhampered labors of the Flemings, no native individualizer and summarizer of their efforts appeared during the one hundred and fifty years prior to the birth of Bach. No northern Palestrina yet fathered a national sacred music suited to the needs of Protestant Germany.

Let none accuse Nature of niggardness because neither seed time nor summer bends with the ripened corn and wheat. Let him await her seasonable yield, unfailing while the sun shines and the earth revolves. But Nature has sowing and springing and ripening in other and far distant fields; and if we, unseeing, comprehend not, let it suffice that she, the wise and provident, wholly knows what sun is shining on those fields, and the diameter of the orbital turning of their world she knows, and the orderly come and go of their unfailing seasons. And so it befell that in fitly appointed time, and not in capricious moment, she gave to the world Sebastian Bach to be the great individualizer and father of German music.

Of Bach's contemporaries and forerunners of the Flemish school, the most worthy were undoubtedly those whom he revered; those who, either by creation or interpretation, incited him to early effort, and easily

moulded his plastic youth into semblance of the unsurpassed composer and performer which, because of mature and independent after-labor, he wholly became. And yet, as compared with him, of what largeness are his outgrown models? Of what enduring substance, of what undimmable fame, such musicians as Sweelinck, Scheidemann, Schuitz, and even Reinken and Buxtchude?

Many a genius has towered the one exception in a family not intellectually prominent. Unlike the majority of his class, Bach owed much to heredity. Others of his blood, immediate ancestors and numerous living relatives, all had accomplished something worthy of mention in music. Nor did Nature expend her energies in producing him the greatest of the Bachs. That of which his genius was the culmination, ceasing not with himself, experienced a gradual decline through his numerous descendants.

Never was a genius more thoroughly equipped for his life work than was Sebastian Bach. Musical learning in him first reached its fullness. In his larger compositions, as in the epics of Milton, every page reveals the student of the ages; but what in lesser men sinks to dry scholarship, in Bach, as in Milton, becomes a glorious compendium of classical erudition, and this because of the abundant presence of that transforming quality denied to mediocrity, to wit, Imagination.

Many a great page of Milton, and, for that matter, of Dante also, proves but hard reading to the unlettered who oftentimes would conceal their ignorance under the guise of fulsome praise. So with Bach. While granting his obvious learning, many amateurs, fairly musical, and not a few professional musicians, but little estimate his noble quality of imagination.

Bach is in very truth the Musician's musician, the touchstone of his training. When for himself one has conquered the technicalities of fugal composition, he is in fair way to estimate Bach at par value, for, to his own discomfiture, he has discovered that the construction of a fugal theme, pronounced and pliant as even the briefest bearing the impress of Bach, is one of the great doings of musical skill and imagination. These qualities Bach further shows in the treatment of subject and counter-subject by means of the stretto, and all devices of Canon and polyphonic counterpoint, moving in broad and stately volume to the final cadence and the organ point.

In their highest and most eloquent efforts, vocal or instrumental, the composers of the Contrapuntal School had recourse always to the fugue whose every voice part is rendered individually prominent as in no other form of musical expression, ancient or modern; nor can anything more adequate in this respect be constructed or conceived of. But the attainment of

a perfect, fugal style is fraught with difficulties insurmountable to many composers, and almost so to some whom we rightly deem among the greatest.

Beethoven himself was not by natural bent a fuguist; his genius led him far afield. Notwithstanding the strength and boldness of his figures, the distinctiveness of his basses, and the melodic flow of the intermediate parts of his harmony, the not many examples of fugue, found in the bulk of his collected works, show chiefly the ambition of the explorer; and this in one the monarch of many another domain of music.

As constructor of vocal fugues, Mendelssohn was all that scholarship could make him, but his themes, when compared with those of Bach and Handel, are deficient in the quality of boldness. The theme is the soul of the fugue, its center and source of life, and bold ness is one of the chief requirements of the theme. Individualized, it attracts instant attention and is easily recognized throughout its augmentations, diminutions, and inversions. Among the leading composers of every land, from Italy to Poland and from France to Scandinavia, may be named many divinely inspired melodists, and also many noble harmonists, whose classic or romantic measures abound in felicitous modulations and every beauty of the free style; but how the great masters of Fugue narrow one by one

as we eliminate those fallen short of its chiefest requirements! Finally there remain but two. Kings are they. Sovereigns indeed. Contemporary rulers born in the selfsame years. George Frederic Handel is one, and Johann Sebastian Bach is the other.

In the "Well-tempered Clavichord," a work which the celebrated theorist Richter has well said "should be in the hands of all who devote themselves to the higher branches of musical study," we have, by the universal acknowledgment of authorities, the culminating perfection of the Contrapuntal School, that ample heritage from an era more and more behind the Classicism of Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven, and the Romanticism of Schumann, Chopin and Wagner. Severe with the legacies of the mediæval spirit, this comprehensive work of Bach, embracing the totality of the major and the minor keys, is, for breadth and strength, comparable with the chief religious frescoes of Michel Angelo.

With reverence, and a sense of deep obligation, every sterling musician looks back to Johann Sebastian Bach, seeing in him the virile forebear of whatsoever is rich and euphonious and learned in modern instrumental music. Composers like Felix Mendelssohn and Robert Franz, have sat at the feet of Bach and hailed him their musical Messiah, and many, numbered not in the circle of such discipleship, have harkened to the voice of his teaching; and some there be, who,

touching but the hem of his garments, were cured of weakness and infirmity.

The grand, old German Chorals, those voicings of religious fervor steadfast and heart-deep, wherefrom every frivolity of the world was banished; those massive, stately hymns of a communion whose worshippers each mingled his individual offering with the outpour of congregational praise, are forever associated with the name of Bach, their amplifier and enricher, as with the name of him who introduced them into the service of the Lutheran Church. Bold and enduring, like monolithic hills, those rugged Chorals long had stood untouched by the meddlesome hand of Mediocrity. Surely their incorporation by Bach into his greatest works demanded a genius equal to that of their originators, and, in addition, the total of judgment and learning which our master summoned to his well-accomplished task.

At the very outset of his career, Bach was drawn to the style of composition which thereafter characterized his efforts. The Italian Opera, that belonging of quite another people, that importation which was to absorb, until past middle life, the energies of his great contemporary Handel, held for Bach no allurements. He had in supreme degree the instinct of the born specialist; he desired and aimed to do a supreme thing supremely. His was that native wisdom which con-

fined his energies within their wide and deep channel, the course of non-resistance indicated by the cleavage of the hills and the lay of the valleys of the rugged, musical landscape which had environed his predecessors, and amidst which he himself matured to self-conscious, artistic being. But, though a specialist, Bach was so in the true sense of the word. His comprehensive interest could not be circumscribed and iron-bound by his specialty. Well he knew the anatomy of the whole body of music, and well he realized the interdependence of its various members; and so with keen interest he noted every happening in parts most removed from the center of its life.

Naturally, we find him seeking acquaintance with Handel far off in the English home of his adoption. But the opportunity for a friendship no doubt of vast, mutual advantage, Handel seems to have ignored. Perhaps he preferred the lone sufficiency of his gigantic selfhood. Other reasons might be conjectured, but, in truth, Handel had grown somewhat out of touch with Bach. Aside from the matter of the Italian Opera, the environments of London metropolitan life, and also the art life of England — largely moulded by her great masters of English verse — had reacted upon the genius of Handel making him in some degree non-German, and yet, by way of compensation, making him the chief glory of English music, and the model of

native composers who but for him might have harked back to Purcell and Orlando Gibbons. Different indeed was the life of Bach, a life remote from the great centers of worldly activity. In that life is seen no arenal contests like those which, fast and furious with thrust and counter thrust, too much filled the rival days of Handel and Bononcini.

The compositions of Bach provoked no partisan spirit, nor cared he for that mere notoriety which benefits the well-damned equally with the well-praised. In the lives of men like Bach and Handel, every moment of well-ordered activity is a boon to their public, every moment of misdirected effort is an unmitigated loss. However, in the life of Bach we lack cause to regret an abortiveness of result lamentable in the life of Handel of whom it might be asked, Of what musical enrichment to the present are those many operatic effusions of his busy, young manhood, and his industrious middle-prime? For the most part they are dead and coffined in the dark of oblivion. Whatsoever escapes forgetfulness has, with rare exceptions, experienced a veritable reincarnation among the florid beauties of his Oratorios, the crown and glory of his last and greatest years.

II

By virtue of his high endowment, Bach possessed that wisdom of genius which, to the thrifty and so-called

practical, is but the foolishness of the visionary. Except in the case of a few works engraved by his own hands, he gave no thought to the immediate outcome of his labors; and yet, amidst the accumulation of his great, unpublished compositions, he wrote on as if all the engravers and compositors of Saxony were crying for copy. A lesser man, a man of talent, would have seen to it that his masterpieces for voice and clavichord and organ were first in the shop and then in the home, the church and the concert hall. That he felt concern for these, his mentally-begotten, is certain; else he had spared himself that prodigious concentration of thought the result of which each preserves in a body vitalized to endure throughout the centuries. No time had he for obtuse and over-cautious publishers, nor would he debase his ideals to popularize and make saleable his inspirations. His was an artistic conscience analogous to that of the saint and the martyr; his their self-sacrifice to principle; his that undebasable virtue, that adherence to conviction, which is its own sweet reward in whatever of high or humble man's lot is fixed. His every creative act spake something like this: "Brief indeed is the most lengthened life of man, and long must the world await another Sebastian Bach. Let me use my permitted day of sunshine ere the hastening gloom enshroud and silence it forever!" So he filled to fullness the incom-

parable hours. Trusting in God and the Time Spirit, he left to an unknown future the propaganda of his deeds.

Ah, when the ravisher of Peace, and the subjugator of his kind, has fulfilled his fierce ambition, and the rent land is desolate and a nation enslaved in tyrant-welded bonds, how fares his name within the hearts and on the lips of men? Does not its lettering pollute with blood the annals of his time? Not with the harsh rattle, not with the red horror of war, but rather with a sound of sweetest harmony comes the conquering musician, and the charmed world, his debtor, proclaims him lord of a realm more peaceful than once the great Augustus mildly ruled.

Longfellow's often-quoted lines:

> Lives of great men all remind us
> We can make our lives sublime,

are not wholly in accord with truth, for the domestic life of many a great man lends warrant to Mrs. Carlyle's warning against marrying a genius. And, surely, what is the brief domestic life of Byron if not a mystery of unhappiness? On the other hand, the lives of some of earth's greatest have proved sublime even in such testing ordeal. No "sweet bells jangled out of tune and harsh" drowned their connubial harmony; no wranglings of the ill-mated made the house rather a

hell than a home; no Coleridge-like shirking of family responsibilities demeaned them in the eyes of men; no divergence of aim kept husband and wife always at cross purpose.

The home of Bach was the modest German home whose like, throughout the Fatherland, had bred the bone and sinew and brain of a great and worthy nation. It was the shielding home into whose peaceful shelter the disquieting world intruded not; the home paternal, maternal, and fraternal, where blossomed daily those sweet domesticities which root themselves in mutual love. It was the simple home, source and conserver of the simple life; the fruitful home free from imputation of race suicide; the happy home forever young with voices of childhood and youth; the Christian home from whence ascended in prayer and thanksgiving the homage of reverent hearts! It was, in short, the ideal home approved by earth, by Heaven ordained and blessed; and he, the great Bach, was its patriarchal head.

The creative artist stands at noblest remove from that brute inheritance of ours, the desire to take by violence. In him is manifest the God-like characteristic of the highest type of man, namely, desire to give for the pure love of giving.

Therefore, on such lives as that of Bach, the welfare of the world depends; they call it back from that

insanity of selfishness toward which the age is tending. Such lives attest the claims of the ideal; they prove them to be of practical value. Such lives are, indeed, barriers against an on-rushing Materialism which otherwise might engulf us all.

Of the modern composer it must often be said that the world is too much with him; and to this misfortune are largely attributable the inequalities abounding in his music. Because of his co-partnership with that which tends to warp and deaden his artistic sensibility, he must needs force his inspiration; the result proving that the serenity of the high vision is not in him, but rather the delirium-nightmare of the world-fever. Nor can it be otherwise unless he benefit by the example of Bach and his kind. Like him, he should achieve a full and final consecration necessary as that of the priest and the prophet. Apart from the world wherewith he mingles; self-centered amidst the babbling multitude; deaf to the babel of their tongues; he should listen to the great song of life, the heavenly melody filling the shut sanctuary of his soul whereinto the world cannot enter. If he so do, it shall not be said of him that he lived in vain, or that his works but swelled the rubbish heap of Time.

The staid, methodical life of Bach the man, wherein nothing erratic is discoverable, was counterparted by the life of Bach the creative genius. The orderly and

17

exhaustive development of a characteristic theme was to him the chief artistic end obtainable. In the school of which he was the great exponent, the imaginings of the composer must be moulded to the requirements of an exacting and time-approved model; but, despite the severity of the strict polyphonic style, whose restrictions led to its modification by the Classicists, and its final abandonment by the Romanticists, Bach moving in this, his congenial element, was no more hampered than is the freest illustrator of modern methods.

Although German Protestantism found in Bach its musical expression, in him — the towering genius — was inevitably paramount that broad and lofty religion of pure art which, above credal differences, outpours its prayer and thanksgiving in the creation of the beautiful, and therefore the good and the true. Would anyone suppose the author of the Mass in B minor to be a dissenter from the Roman Catholic communion? As a noble vehicle of religious feeling, the Mass inspired Bach to a work surpassing all similar efforts of Roman Catholic composers; a work which, to every heart in tune with the sublime, is a revelation of the essence of undogmatic religion.

Whilst grave dignity well becomes a king, and whilst the voice and look of authority are rightfully his, we love to see him doff at times the insignia of his station,

and eschew the pomp and ceremony of royal surroundings to enact a part identifying him with the human in the great common life of the world.

Even so we see the sovereign of the Fugue, the Mass, the Cantata and the "Passion," unbending affably toward such lesser things as the Suite, the Partita and the a capella Motet. But, though condescending, Bach is nevertheless the king; hence these all acquire from his magnetic, uplifting presence, a consequence before unknown to any of their kind.

Bearing in mind the lives of such men as Sir Henry Irving, one hardly realizes that the play-actor of the Elizabethan Era had no more social status than the veriest mountebank. The German musical genius of Bach's day, and for long thereafter, was usually a mere retainer to some consequential petty prince, and, socially, only a degree higher than his master's lackey. But habit, sprung from a necessity which itself may have originated in a refinement and delicacy of organization inclining the musician rather to submit than to combat the coarse and selfish, had so accustomed the court composer to the rôle of servile dependent upon royal patronage, that he seldom realized to what degredation his anciently esteemed calling, that of the bard, had fallen.

But as for the masculinely self-assertive Bach, fortunately or unfortunately not often in touch with

princes, he assumed no attitude of flattery toward his employers, the penurious and unjustly-exacting town authorities of Liepsic.

Lamentable indeed is the fact that Bach was forced by circumstances into what, to one of his capabilities, must have been the most dreary, routine drudgery. Imagine Handel leaving half-penned some sublime Chorus, to toil with a dull and refractory pupil who never by any means would attain to average musicianship.

To sensitive nerves, over-tensioned through sympathy with a high-wrought emotional nature which aspires and soars towards some beauty native to another sphere, such instant drop is comparable to that of the wounded bird checked in the moment of most buoyant flight. Beethoven would none of it for, because of his bachelorhood, he was independent; but with Bach, the good father of sons and daughters to the number of twenty, it was far otherwise. Toil he must and toil he did as cantor in the school and choirmaster in the church.

To certain musicians far less endowed than was Bach, the act of teaching has been but semblance of labor, and, at times, the merest farce. Behold the modern, world-flattered, fashion-sought Virtuoso of the Pianoforte, accessible only to the highest aspirant to musical renown! Behold that awe-struck aspirant

ushered into the presence of the august one! He listens to the embarrassed player, yes, he the lofty deigns to listen! Ah! but will he, the great Jove of modern music, look down in kindness from his Parnassus, or will he utterly blast with the lightning of his eyes, and dumfound with the angry thunders of his mouth? Who can tell? Surely none but the great Jove himself, for his pleasure or his displeasure, like that of the ancient deity, is but matter of caprice dependent wholly upon his present mood. How the conditions which hampered the life of Bach contrast with those favoring the musical celebrity of our day! But then, the world abounds with incongruities even to the placing of the beggar on the throne and the king on the dunghill.

The poet bards of long ago, the Ossians of the North and the Homers of the South, declaimed their epics of love and war to a harp accompaniment which often must have approached free improvisation. The complex recitative of Wagner, for example, the endless melody of his "Tristan and Isolde," purports to be the attained ideal of those elder singers; but, between the bald freedom of the old and the luxuriant freedom of the new, have obtained what Wagner considered two grave, musical mistakes: first, the evolution of fixed form originating in the primitive dance tune and eventuating in the Bach Fugue, and, second, largely

due to the labors of Bach, the individualizing of instrumental music apart from vocal music once deemed its indispensable auxiliary.

Speaking without bias, it should be said that although to Bach we justly render every encomium due unto one of the most gifted masters of music, we give with full knowledge that his art, notwithstanding its beauty and excellence, is but a facet of the gem whose all of resplendence these later days are privileged to behold. Probably the perfection of contrapuntal writing was to Bach the perfection, the entirety, of great music. He would doubtless have condemned as vague and discursive much in the pianoforte and orchestral works which characterized Beethoven's middle and last period.

How he would have regarded certain liberties in the harmonic progression may be surmised. Although Bach himself was in this respect something of an innovator, he must have deemed such divergence the justifiable limit of rule-breaking. Could he have looked forward to the chief exponent of the Classical School, he might have said, "This Beethoven goes too far, even to the deliberate employment of consecutive, perfect fifths in rash attempt to produce dubious effects. Besides, he abandons the native German domain of the Fugue and debouches upon a land whereof I know not, a strange land of questionable manners and customs."

III

Monteverde in his day dared to introduce the unprepared seventh of the dominant triad; but, in boldness he was not alone. In fact, the development of polyphony from the wholly unembellished and quite faulty chord progressions of early mediæval music, has been but a series of innovations at first condemned, then suffered, and then adopted. The earliest polyphonic writers founded their music wholly on the ecclesiastical scales derived from the Greek modes, and approved by Ambrose and Gregory. With the single exception of the Ionic scale, identical with our scale of C major, these scales were defective chiefly in one essential, to wit: in place of the modern sharped seventh, they contained the flatted seventh. This error precluded the possibility of the characterizing major third of the dominant chord in both the major and the minor. Then again, the sounding of the flatted seventh, which in modern tonality indicates modulation to the subdominant key, suggested to the old contrapuntists a triad now deemed wholly foreign to the tonic. The resulting vagueness found remedy where one should least expect it, for, in their melodies, the popular writers of both song and dance were led instinctively to sharp the seventh, and otherwise reconstruct the six defective ecclesiastical scales.

The increasing use of accidentals in contrapuntal and sacred music, gradually evolved the chromatic scale, and led to the founding of a major and a minor scale on each of its twelve semitones. These twenty-four were now the basis of that grand and satisfying instrumental polyphony which Bach was to build in his "Well-tempered Clavichord."

As late as the time of Carissimi, and for some years thereafter, polyphonic writers had not wholly cast off the spell of Ambrose and Gregory, for, whilst the seventh was now by universal usage sharped in the cadence, otherwhere still lingered a tendency to revert to the flatted seventh of the ecclesiastical scales.

At this juncture, the further development of polyphony, and, in fact, the further development of all great music, found in Bach that peculiar genius which it wholly needed. He became the masterly unifier of the harmonic and the polyphonic systems. With a correct idea of key relationship, he grouped the family of chords around the tonic and the dominant after the manner of to-day. At the same time, his unparalleled use of anticipations, suspensions and passing notes, produced an effect wonderfully rich in the stately sweep of his measures. Thus he prepared the way for the classical music of Beethoven, who, turning from strict polyphony to a style wherein his endowed emotional nature found wider and freer scope, became

in turn an innovator in that he gave greater variety to the harmonic tissue by means of bold and before-unattempted modulations. Beethoven in turn prepared the way for Wagner who essayed to enlarge the number of related keys, besides carrying the art of modulation to before-unknown lengths, even to the limit of good taste: also by an exhaustive use of anticipations, suspensions, and passing notes, this latest master revealed the fullest development of the Bachian polyphony.

How little of true foresight comes to the eyes of the sage! How incommeasurable that foresight with his great and far looking back! How much of riddle his prophesying touches not and his dying leaves unsolved! Bach knew nothing of the Classicism of Beethoven, who, in turn, knew nothing of the Romanticism of Schumann and Chopin; and what knew these of the latest art-interblendings of Richard Wagner and Richard Strauss? Can there be other musical riddles worth the solving? If so, what are they; and who their solver? For answer, ask the average musician of to-morrow; but not the authorities of to-day.

The career of Bach, the composer, covered a period of about forty-five years, in fact, a period longer by thirteen years than the entire life of Schubert; a period longer by nine years than the life of Mozart; longer by six years than the life of Mendelssohn; and longer by five years than the lives of Chopin and Von

Weber. And yet Handel and Haydn exceeded by something like ten years, and Verdi by nearly twenty years, the extended term of Bach's productivity.

Notwithstanding the fatal catastrophe which terminated the promise of the poet Shelley; notwithstanding the hard conditions which cramped and well-nigh thwarted the divinely-endowed Mozart, misplaced as a bird of Paradise caged in an Arctic clime, it can with truth be said that however short the earthly years allotted to men of genius, they, in most instances, have, as by Divine ordering, given to the world their best.

When we have known the genius through his works, those heart-resemblances, those mind-born counterparts of his inner self, we would contact the outer man, and discover in facial and bodily expression some token of that which flesh has clothed. Denied this, we turn to sculptured or painted likeness of such as Johann Sebastian Bach.

In vain we search his pictured face for hint of the vacillating or the superficial. Every feature and every lineament is indicative of massive, self-centered power dependent only as man is dependent, being but mortal. In that face is much of clinging to the mind's self-imposed task; something too of downright obstinacy, as also in the sturdy form which, like post or pillar, would say, "I stand! turn and resist me not!"

Behold him the progenitor of many children after the flesh, and many, many sprung from his teeming and tireless brain! Behold him, the musical athlete, challenging virtuosity to trial of skill and endurance, while he himself rejoices like the swift and strong runner sure of his lead in the race!

Behold him deferential, but not obsequious, the admired and sought of a monarch and the chief comer to the palace of Potsdam! Behold him, unflattered by the attentions of royalty and court, wending back to Liepsic, and his humble cantorship with its meagre stipend! Behold his reverent return to the old Lutheran Church of Saint Thomas and the well-remembered organ where with praiseful notes he often had sought and found a greater than Frederic, or any earthly potentate!

Between the death of Bach and the present time, more than one hundred and fifty years have intervened. Years indeed memorable; years of unparalleled activity and change in the musical world; years of greater enrichment of its repertory than were all preceding them. Those one hundred and fifty years have given us the perfected beauties of Italian, French and German Opera. They have produced for us Haydn and his great contemporaries and near successors. From them is that priceless heritage, the Mendelssohn Oratorios. They have brought to our

charmed ears the lyric songs of Schubert and Schumann, and the unique and wholly adapted tone-poetry of Chopin, composer par excellence for that instrument of which the clavichord was the humble precursor. Those years have enlarged the orchestra by introducing many new and telling instruments, also they have developed its technique and otherwise elevated it to the virtuoso demands of our most modern composers. Nevertheless, the music of Bach is nothing belittled by the vast sum total of subsequent achievement, nor grows it useless like a garment cast aside because no longer of fashionable cut and color. And yet that music was underestimated and much neglected in Bach's lifetime, and, afterwards for a long period, almost forgotten, until, through the efforts of Mendelssohn and Franz and the Bach society, it was rescued from the possibility of a fate like that of many an ancient writing for which the regretful world has vainly sought.

Bach was the famed virtuoso of an era when far less than modern skill was necessary for the manipulation of the organ and the clavichord, and yet his works are to-day surprisingly well adapted to the technical needs of the advanced student. Those for clavichord are musically adequate in the programmes of the modern concert hall, whilst the "Preludes and Fugues," and also the Toccatas, are the delight and ambition of good organists throughout the world.

The man Johann Sebastian Bach; how much might be said of him, the kind husband and father, the good and respected citizen, the devout follower of Luther, the foremost among contemporary virtuosi, the faithful music-master in the school, the conscientious precentor in the church, the unobtrusive genius touched not by the infirmities of noble minds. Surely much more might be said in way of encomium than here undertaken.

The composer, Johann Sebastian Bach; how much more might be said of his works than in these meagre pages; how much more in way of analysis; but such is not our object.

As for praise, in the performance of those works we are heart to heart with the living Bach, the immortal one, the deathless part of whom speaks from every full and satisfying measure their meed of praise, wherefore the musical world, even the modern musical world, listens and approves.

But to what shall we liken his works? With what shall they be compared? Surely with the mighty, the steadfast, the undecaying! They are comparable with those man-builded mountains of stone resting forever upon the floor of the Nile Valley. Yes, they are in very truth the Pyramids of Music, and Bach with Cyclopean hand has quarried them, block by block from the enduring substance of the cliffs, and he has

fitted each to other with that accuracy of judgment, precision of workmanship, and grandeur of conception, which characterized the architect-builders of Old Egypt; those whose models were the indestructible upbuildings of God, even the ancient and everlasting hills.

FREDERIC CHOPIN

FREDERIC CHOPIN

I

THE measure of a man is the measure of his impress upon the world, not solely and of necessity the world of his day, but, in fact, the world of all days henceforth to be. Should we define that impress as something outwardly apparent like his doing who delves in the mine, or ploughs in the field, the statement is inadequate and even false. Our world is a manifold condition wherein, as one ascends, things material eventuate in things mental and things spiritual.

This globe, vast and teeming with life; this total of mundane consciousness, is, in its imponderable aspect, subdivided into many and diverse worlds, each wholly sphered, each sufficing for its adapted dwellers.

What a variety of living! Behold the world of the Musician, bright and beautiful as a loka of the Buddhist heaven! a flexible world close-touching and almost blending with that of the Artist or the Poet. Behold the world of the Philosopher which, like the world of the Astronomer, seems to its denizen but an islet in the ocean of mind-baffling immensity. Quite apart from these revolves the solid and well-defined, but somewhat narrow, world of the man of mercantile pursuits, and more remote, under monotonous skies, the dull world

of the unthinking, drear as a desert save here and there some little turf of almost withered green.

However, the world of the Musician claims our attention; let us look with his eyes; hear with his ears; understand with his intuitions. All else shut out, his world is subdivisible: within it is discovered another. Lured on by the shine of golden wings, and the delicate cantabile of angel voices ineffably sweet and pure, we enter where dwells the soul of a true tone-poet, the soul of Frederic Chopin.

In Chopin, the subject of this study, the blood of two nations met and mingled. The France of his father, and the Poland of his mother, could each with equal justice claim him as its own. Chopin was born in the vicinity of Warsaw, on March 1, 1809, and in the capital city of the Grand Duchy, created by Napoleon, he was educated musically until the age of twelve, an age when the average musician enters upon his pupilage. Then it was deemed best by his professors that he be left to the self-development of his unique individuality.

Naturally our precocious child, our future composer *sui generis*, was now the pet of the aristocracy; the plaything of that class which, as a whole, not only in Warsaw, but also in pretty much the world over, lived, as now it lives, to be amused and served by those who, in a land of democratic opportunities, would soon be its acknowledged superiors.

For an artist wholly unique, a smoothing and polishing to the many exactions of polite society is an undertaking questionable indeed. To come into outward conformity with mere convention is to imperil the freedom of his inner individuality. The actual effect of such a course on the genius of Chopin cannot be determined; that it survived the ordeal is proof enough of its virility and tenacity of purpose.

As we have hinted, the world of the Musician, unlike that of the severely practical man, has no fixed diameter; elastic, it widens at his will; at the bidding of his sympathies it stretches until co-extensive with the globe. Thus it gathers into its circumference every land where live and labor his brethren in the art. And so we find our youthful composer looking beyond the limits of his Warsaw, looking and longing for physical contact with that with which his heart was already in rapport; Dresden and Prague and Berlin, but chiefly Vienna the renowned, the rich and glorious with the memories and bequeathings of Haydn and Mozart and Beethoven and Schubert. There could be heard, in its unfading loveliness, the "Freischütz" of Weber in whom Romanticism first wakened like a rose at dawn. There such pianists as Czerny and Hummel would discover to Chopin his failings, or prove his merits to be all his own. And then, far off as the horizon of his day-dreams, upgrew the sumptuous city on the Seine, the

siren city sweet of voice and fair of form; the heartless, hope-wrecking city beneath whose mocking eye the unheard Wagner in after years must chafe and struggle and starve and almost cease to be.

Chopin was instinctively and wholly a romanticist. Though deemed ultra by many a contemporary critic, to us he stands revealed the great tone-poet of the piano; the Keats, or rather the Shelley of musicians; the inimitable modern from whom the groping and straining virtuoso-producers of to-day have much retrograded.

As a pianoforte writer, Chopin has only Beethoven as compeer, but each in his way is supreme. The supremacy of Beethoven is that of the symphonist in whose brain the orchestra sounds ever a multitudinous variety of tone color. The piano was his dearest friend, the orchestra his great heart's love not to be shut out, not to be forgotten, because of friendship's closest, warmest hour; and so the orchestra would crowd and cramp itself in the piano. On the other hand, his chosen instrument was to Chopin his all of abiding friendship and passionate, absorbing love, and every height and every deep of his being is therein contained; his every unclouded gem, set in ornate and exquisite workmanship, his every matched and strung pearl, finds there a golden casket. Chopin made of his Erard, or his Pleyel, a novel instrument.

No longer of uniform tint, its tone colors were yet unlike those from the orchestral blending of wood and metal and string.

Ere long our composer-virtuoso has met and measured many of his renowned contemporaries, and, by fair comparison, he knows to a nicety his own status; already he anticipates the acclaim of a just future. Such seership is necessary to the man of genius. Foreknowledge is his saving rock amidst the merciless seas of ridicule. Clinging to that stay, he awaits the spent fury of the storm, the lulling of winds, the leveling of waves.

For the sake of comparison let us, from the vantage ground of this present, glance at the chief musical celebrities contacted by Chopin in the years of his youthful activity. Thalberg, smooth and faultless executant, delight of the dilettante and the superficial amateur, was throwing off a series of showy but withal empty transcriptions of which his "Mosé in Egitto" may be held the best. As a moulder of musicians, notably Liszt, and as a developer of technique, the hard-working Czerny was proving of immense value, but as a composer he was too diligent, not waiting for that inspiration which cannot be forced. Of Hummel, much over-rated in those days, the best thing sayable is that he influenced the shaping of Chopin's concertos, the least faulty of his larger works. Moscheles, the

tutor of Mendelsshon, was a musician much esteemed by Chopin who deemed it a privilege to play the bass to the composer's treble in his chief pianoforte works. Unlike certain of our modern pianists, Kalkbrenner was no muscular virtuoso venting his rage upon the keyboard. He was, on the contrary, a performer of refinement and precision; one who could claim certain excellencies akin to those of Chopin. But alas for human vanity! his great show pieces, the cause of much self-gratulation, have vanished from every concert repertory and every musical collection save that of the antiquary. Mendelssohn, despite his eminence, had the backward-looking eye; much in his matter had already been sung and played, but not with the grace and charm of that accomplished scholar. And yet is the "Elijah" a triumph, a thing enduring, an epitome of all his powers. Oak-ribbed, wealth-laden voyager on the sea of Time, how bravely it breasts the waves that long have whelmed the wrecks of mediocre talent and seeming genius and empty pretence! Schumann, discoverer of the genius of Chopin, was a musician and thinker, an ever-broadening cosmopolitan, a radical in the van of esthetic progress and, inevitably, the soul of the new musical romanticism.

Almost any page, almost any stanza of Shelley — most ethereal of word-poets — would indicate an unobstructed outpouring which the first drafts of even his

wholly sustained inspirations quite disprove. Beethoven's collected sketch-books are a study in the evolution of themes afterward impressed with the seal of spontaneity. We are told by one who ought to know, that Chopin's every opus was born only after soul-travail both long and sore. Against these curious facts can be set this apparent contradiction: facility is the rule among the merely talented, and many such have with ease dashed off their best efforts, of which doing they are wont to boast because, to the popular way of thinking, facility is proof of genius. Now why should Shelley and Beethoven and Chopin wrestle with the idea, and Pollok and Czerny and their kind be so easily victorious?

As we have said, our human world is subdivisible into manifold states of consciousness, each a world to its dwellers. The world of the man of talent may be, and usually is, but a step inward from the world of the multitude; hence few obstacles hinder communication between these nearly-related worlds. The ideas of the inner are with ease translated to the understanding of the outer. Evidently this is untrue of those inmost worlds where dwell the deep- and high-dreaming Poet and Musician whose respective domains are almost outside of time and space, those limitations wherewith the human mind divides the known from the unknown, the sensible from the super-sensible, the finite from the

Infinite. Having in them little or nothing of the quantitative, the ideas of those worlds elude the mental grasp of all save the finely-organized man of genius.

How to come into touch with the great, common world by giving fixed form to that which is formless and by rendering tangible the intangible, making seen the unseen, felt the unfelt, and heard the unheard, is the problem of Genius. It was the problem of Michel Angelo before the unchiselled "David"; the problem of Raphael musing upon the Madonnaless canvas; the problem of the absorbed Beethoven when, in his seemingly aimless meanderings, the trees by the roadside and in the forest would prompt him to solution with their whispered "Holy! Holy!" and it was the problem of Chopin as in the quiet of his study, apart from the roar of the great city, the empty page tormented him with the thought of unwritten and perhaps unwritable beauties.

That within the space of twenty-four days, Handel penned the notes of his most glorious work, proves nothing but his enormous powers of mental concentration, and the endurance of a brain supported by a vigorous body; but to the vital question: How long had "The Messiah" been maturing in him? history affords no conclusive answer. Rossini was no doubt a facile composer, yet from what soul-deep his operas came is proved by his deliberate estimate of their

longevity. He believed that as an entirety nothing but "Il Barbiere" would survive.

The well-attested fact that Beethoven and Chopin, those cautious and self-critical composers, were both extempore performers par excellence, goes far toward proving the impromptu inferior to the finished after-product. And does not all this favor our view that from the birth-throes, and not from the painlessness of Genius, are born the masterpieces of every art?

II

Genius is essentially sympathetic and would draw all men into rapport with its world of light and love. Companioned it must be, aye, close companioned! But descend it will never because to Genius its world embodies more of reality than does all this terrestial globe.

Happy the master gathering around him his little following! Happy indeed the genius, the solitary being, who finds among men an ideal friend; one to whom self-explanation, so hateful to Genius, is needless; one who knows instinctively the soul life of the other! To Genius that friend is a proof of its mission; a witness that it lives not a thing more useless than the most ordinary mortal; an assurance that it yet will come into the fullness of its own. Such a friend

Chopin was now to find within that great Paris which like a gigantic lodestone was drawing him to herself.

Franz Liszt, the Hungarian composer, pianist and literateur, was born in 1811, and in 1831, the date of Chopin's advent in the French capital, he was but twenty years of age, and so by two years the junior of the Pole. Soon the fame of the younger man would eclipse even that of Kalkbrenner, esteemed the first pianist of the day. Liszt was steadily nearing an eminence ever afterward his own against all comers, that of the world's unparalleled pianoforte virtuoso.

The artist who, in days to come, would first divine and adequately measure the comprehensiveness of Wagner; the timely helper who would deem it a duty, a privilege, to aid and cheer the impecunious political refugee in the despondent years of his exile; the whole-hearted enthusiast whose determined arm would open for the composer of "Lohengrin," the close-shut door of the Temple of Fame, was the friend in whom Chopin now saw reflected his own peculiar genius. As the painter, stepping backward from his easel, scans his work as a whole, and in the most favorable light, so, from the view-point of Liszt's intuitive rendering, Chopin better estimated his own productions than could otherwise have been possible.

That consummate interpretation of a work proves not one's ability to create its like is shown by the

coming together of Chopin and Liszt. While Liszt was indubitably of advantage to Chopin, the latter in turn reacted upon the former. In the nature of the fiery Hungarian, and that of the dreamy Pole, were those resemblances and differences which make high friendship a possibility and also a means of mutual growth through reciprocity of ideas.

The fascinating and dominating Liszt was by nature a Bohemian. From first to last he dwelt in the realm of those laxities and unconventionalities which dismay the ordinary mortal, but whose glamour is over the life of many an artist. And yet, despite every shortcoming, Liszt had that which was much indeed, a virtue frequently the saving one of genius, to wit, the artistic conscience.

Beneath a demeanor disguising rather than revealing his inner self, Chopin was an ardent soul, a Polish patriot from whose heart overflowed, to his every page, the sorrows of his native land. Those sorrows were a cloud shadowing the radiance of his ideal world, and at times dulling it almost to the sombre hues of this earth, begetter of many sorrows.

It is regrettable that Chopin sought to bind within the limits of conventional forms, already half outgrown, his poetical ideas amenable only to the requirements of those freer forms for which Berlioz and Schumann were striving, and to which Wagner ultimately attained.

In his Impromptus, and a few other ventures beyond self-imposed barriers, Chopin made most praiseworthy use of freedom, but quickly he returns to contemplation of his beloved Mozart, that perfect master of classical form. Naturally the polished frequenter of the Parisian drawing-room and salon, found no lasting pleasure in the wild freedom and amplitude of the forest of Romanticism. The change was too abrupt and novel. Those far-reaching vistas of unfrequented shade! How different from the metropolitan thoroughfare! Those mighty but fantastically-growing trees thick-planted by Nature's careless hand! those never-trimmed and irregular branches! those fallen and dismantled trunks! How unlike the well-kept parks of Paris and Versailles!

While composing, Chopin never quite divorced himself from the keyboard of his piano, and yet the writer who would attain to untrammeled expression, in both matter and form, should compose beneath a roof no narrower than the dome of heaven. Let the study be his reference room, his library, and, for convenience, his place of final elaboration. Like Beethoven and Wordsworth, let him receive at first hand the impartings of Nature that needed teacher of us all.

In the heart of Chopin the melodies of his beloved Poland, mingling with his own imaginings, became

invested with a subtle, poetical charm and a delicate sweetness idealizing their own quaint loveliness.

The Mazurka! does it not bring the peasant gathering on the green; the evening or the holiday of swaying forms and agile feet and rustic beauty in the graceful round? The Polonaise! does it not bring the brilliant hall; the jewelled fair; the stately-moving, king-led company of lords and noble dames? Yes, such were the scenes which, to the dances of his people, Chopin had conjured from the happy, bygone days. How appealing this music to those of the old Polish nobility then finding in Paris their most congenial abode in exile! Largely through the influence of these the Parisian success of Chopin was speedier, although more circumscribed, than that of Meyerbeer, who, only by laborious and painstaking adaptation of his methods to the requirements of the French operatic stage, won the Parisian public and brought them to their knees before the shrine of "Robert."

In the homes of rank and wealth, Chopin now mingles with princes, ministers, ambassadors and literary notables. Titled ladies are his pupils and, because he would have it so, he deems his musical self best understood by the lionizing fashionables of French society who, in fact, looked not beneath the finished, but by no means robust virtuoso, and polished gentleman conforming to their every convention.

The fashionables of French society! Oh for a moment natural and true amidst the false and artificial hours! A candid, soul-sprung greeting to shame the outward suavity where envy rankles, or where hatred burns within! Oh for a laden word to prove the hollowness of empty tongues! A normal heart of innocence in that blasé assembly! Oh for an individuality unrepressed; a potent unit in that crowd of merest ciphers!

It is almost incredible that in such environment Chopin composed many of his noblest works. His Rondo in C minor Op. 1, published in 1825, when he was but sixteen years of age, and therefore in the old Warsaw days, had announced the advent of a writer of the highest rank, one authoritatively proclaimed by Schumann on the appearance of the variations in B flat Op. 2. Arriving in Paris late in the year 1831, the man of two-and-twenty was already known to musicians like Franz Liszt and Ferdinand Hiller, as creator of such music as the Concerto in F minor, the Concerto in E minor, and the Funeral March in C minor. This last was afterward eclipsed by the great march in the B flat minor Sonata. But the bulk of Chopin's pianoforte works was written during the next seventeen years, and despite adverse conditions other than those of environment.

III

Chopin's compositions, aside from his Waltzes, were in his day too novel and strange to attract more than the discerning and progressive few. Obtuse and ignorant critics vented their wrath upon them. Even Moscheles found them full of abrupt and harsh modulations, and the attitude of Mendelssohn was one of mingled like and loathing. Liszt alone accepted them in their entirety. Because of all this, their inevitably small sale made Chopin's office of composer comparatively an unremunerative one.

Unlike Beethoven who, from choice as well as necessity, lived most frugally and solitary as a lion in his den, Chopin was somewhat of a Sybarite in his tastes, and, furthermore, improvident and accustomed to extravagant expenditures. Therefore, while esteeming himself at par value as a composer, he was of necessity a teacher also. In addition to the distractions and fatigues of regular lesson-giving, an ever-present misfortune, a wasting and fatal malady, crippled what should have been his years of physical prime. Yet despite all that certainly hindered and probably impaired the result of Chopin's Parisian years of creative effort, that result may be summarized as follows:

First and foremost, are those "Soul-animating strains, alas too few!" the four incomparable Ballades of

which Schumann said that a poet inspired them, and a poet might easily write words to them. In the Ballades, Chopin encompasses a height and breadth and depth elsewhere unattained in his works. Here the local is indeed outgrown, and almost the universal is in the sweep of his vision. Abreast of the bardic view, he develops a world theme, he rings a story of the antique and the modern.

Next in enumeration come the great Polonaises, epics of Poland in heroic meter, Iliads of battle on her native soil. The bitter taunt of rage and scorn; the hurled defiance and the fierce reply; the rush, the crash of the onset; the broken swords and splintered lances; the vanquished rider and the fallen war-horse; the anguished cries of dying men; the hopeless wail of captives; the harsh rattle of galling chains; the deep and solemn notes of dirge. Iliads of Poland! Iliads of her olden glory and her prone defeat; and then an Iliad of her proud-arisen days to be!

In marked contrast, and therefore proving the versatility of Chopin, we have what outlasts a thousand ballroom waltzes every one of which, like the gay butterfly, joys through its little day and then is gone forever. Of the poetic and perfect Waltzes of Chopin, evidently not written for the mere dancer, may be instanced the one in A flat op. 42; also the set of three op. 34. The second of them, tenderly melancholy in both

minor and major, was an especial favorite of its author. Nor should we overlook the celebrated waltz in D flat which, while fulfilling all musical requirements, has proved universally popular, being, in fact, what its history indicates, the unpremeditated outpour of a happy hour.

The greater number of the forty-one Mazurkas published by Chopin, date from the Paris period. They are easy of execution and often brief, some being held within the limits of sixty measures. In these Mazurkas the poet of the epic turns to polish the line, the stanza; the painter of the heroic perfects the miniature. Each Mazurka is a tiny picture of Polish life; a little draught from the well of Polish folk-song. How readily these dances lend themselves to an exaggerated rubato, the common fault of would-be interpreters!

Because of its noble, singing quality, the key of D flat was chosen for some of Chopin's most exquisite melodies. In this markedly individual key, whose tone color is but the veil of some unimagined splendor, was set the "Berceuse," most ethereal and lovely of cradle songs. A sweet murmur of waters, it glides and ripples and gently falls from no earth-born spring. No upland snows make clear its limpid, winding way. From loftier far than ever rain-clouds find, the home of innocence which slumbering infancy beholds, it brings of

Wisdom's fount what, hidden from the wise, is yet revealed to babes.

Another of the Paris pieces is the somewhat long Barcarolle in nocturne form; an Italian scene beneath the skies of Venice. Not the palaced Venice of marble and porphyry and alabaster, but that mobile Venice which mirrors the rising moon touched at times by filmy shades, yet light enough for lovers borne upon the sparkling tides. Though devoid of striking contrasts, this Barcarolle contains probably more of variety than Mendelssohn could have woven into it.

In Paris were composed all save one of the nineteen Nocturnes bearing the name of Chopin. On these, and the Polonaise in A major, and such Waltzes as op. 18 in E flat, mostly rests his popular estimate.

As a producer in this lighter vein, Chopin encounters no rival. A few, a very few of the earlier Nocturnes betray the influence of John Field originator of this somewhat sentimental style of salon music; but shortly the Chopinesque quality asserts itself and lo, the night of lulled winds, heavy with the tropical odor of flowers! Night of indolent southern stars, and the chaste Diana grown languorous and tender! Night of little clouds that weep they know not why! Night of the bashful, subdued bird that lifts not to the cheerful sun his notes of love and grief and yearning.

Without underestimating the musical and technical

value of Clementi's "Gradus ad Parnassum" on whose broad and solid foundation rests all modern pianoforte playing, and without in the least belittling the contributions of Cramer, it may be asserted that the Etudes of Chopin are revelations in technique. Of all their class, they alone anticipate the virtuoso requirements of to-day, while some, like Nos. 3 and 6 of op. 10, are, as inspired music, unmatched in the world's repertory of piano studies. Painstaking authorities have edited, and eminent critics have almost extravagantly praised them. Hunaker holds them monumental of our nineteenth century attainment in piano music. However, Chopin's twenty-seven Etudes have little place in this present enumeration, for, excepting two or three in the second book, op. 25, they, like the Concertos, the Bolero, the Rondos op. 1 and op. 16, and the Variations op. 2, all of them antedate the year 1831.

The weight of evidence would prove that of the twenty-four Preludes op. 28, the bulk was composed prior to Chopin's visit to Majorka in 1839. Schumann called them "ruins, eagle feathers all strangely intermingled." To Kullak they are "little masterpieces of the first rank." Hunaker holds them "a sheaf of moods." Rubinstein believes them the pearls of Chopin's works. They are in fact autobiographical poems in brief stanzas. Though we grant the excellence and

completeness of many, and the individuality of all these Preludes, certain of them seemed fragmentary. The sixteen measures comprised in No. 7, may be the sole remnant of some discarded Mazurka. Those thirteen measures of solemn moving chords in C minor, the total of No. 20, suggest the episode in the G minor Nocturne, and may have been preserved from some such composition.

We have, by Chopin, four Impromptus all written later than the year 1831: op. 29 in A flat, op. 36 in F sharp major, op. 51 in G flat, and the posthumous Fantasie Impromptu in C sharp minor. The word Impromptu is usually a misnomer betraying, to the discerning, the vanity of an author who would have his public suppose him capable of off-hand effusions in all ways superior to the careful work of others.

That Chopin is here not altogether innocent is at once shown by the premeditated consecutive minor ninths between the melody and accompaniment in the first and second measures of op. 29. The six introductory measures of op. 36 are a carefully written two-part bass which, blending with the treble melody entering at the seventh measure, forms with it a three-part harmony worthy of the most painstaking writer. In op. 51, Chopin is chromatic and winding and premeditating as is his wont. Op. 66 comes nearest the title, "Impromptu." Interest here centers in the right

hand, which, throughout the first and the third sections, is an uninterrupted torrent of semiquavers, and, in the D flat middle movement, is a sustained and melodious cantabile which yet is not the master's true cantabile, that noble and tender and pensive poetry pervading, for instance, the con anima of the B flat minor Scherzo.

The instrumental music of Haydn and Mozart furnishes many models of the true Scherzo. The Sonatas and Symphonies of Beethoven exhibit in its fullness this evolution of the old Minuet, but, coming to the four Scherzos of Chopin, the mere classifier is puzzled and halted while the real musician is exalted and led onward. Leaving the consideration of name and structure and logical sequence to the hypercritical, he enters without cavil this unique, forest-encompassed temple of art where joy and laughter indeed are not, for an elegiac sadness murmurs from the over-roofing green, and oftentimes the winds without, those whisperers in their woodland tongue, will swell to impassioned euphony or hopeless, wild lament, and suddenly midst Nature's momentary hush, a solemn, deep-toned temple hymn is breathed around, and then, above, the swaying branches make their moan anew, and hark! the harsh, capricious blast is pouring once again its tale of wretchedness and woe.

The mind of Chopin, like that of every man and woman of true genius, exhibits both male and female

characteristics, for the sexless human soul, the source of those characteristics, would stamp itself clearly and wholly on the impressionable brain of such as he. Chopin's masculineness, so often in abeyance, as throughout the Nocturnes, at once asserts itself in the noble Fantaisie op. 49, whose recurring first figure requires no fortissimo to drive it deep into the heart.

The true genius has his moment when, sole and venturous, he lifts him loftier than the eagle. The sun beyond — the light he failed to reach — did it not from the airless heaven scorn his defeat and leave him humbled in the height? And yet the tree-tops, far beneath upon the mountain, were proud with wings that never dared as he. Many fanciful and imaginative interpretations we have of that empyrean flight the F minor Fantaisie, but, as if too conscious of failure in the unattainable, the author would discredit them all with a commonplace explanation.

Inevitably the collected works of great authors, in whatever department, contain that which as a whole adds little or nothing to their eminent reputation. Of the works of Chopin's mature years, the Allegro de Concert, the Tarantelle, and the Rondo op. 16, belong in this category. And yet any of these, the first especially, would make famous a pianoforte composer not already high in the first rank.

Chopin, as we have seen, studied well the composi-

tions of Bach, and to that study should be traced his comprehensive knowledge of harmonic possibilities. This is wholly proved by his every important work; but in daring how he distances the profound and methodical contrapuntist of Leipsic! Only Wagner and Richard Strauss are bolder than he. As a harmonist Chopin was bent on notable things, and with equal zeal he essayed that most difficult and hazardous of undertakings, the Sonata. Had our Romanticist but given to the pianoforte Sonatas of Beethoven somewhat of those hours devoted to "The Well-tempered Clavichord," the effect on op. 35 and op. 58, probably had been an enrichment of our repertory of high-class piano Sonatas. After all, the Sonata is a perfected growth of Classicism, and so lends itself most ungraciously to the looser treatment of the Romanticist, for it demands not only sequence of ideas and systematic development of themes, but also a unification of its constituent movements that as a whole it shall be homogeneous.

During his Parisian career, Chopin composed three Sonatas, op. 35 and op. 58, for piano, and op. 65, for piano and violincello. This last, a most unequal work, has provoked more of adverse criticism than any other bearing his name.

Chopin's chief defect, one almost always apparent, originated in his somewhat narrow sympathies, which,

though deep, did yet by no means fathom the joys underlying and destined to outlast the waves of sorrow, which, to his circumscribed vision, were sufficient for the engulfing of the world. What, we ask, was the partition, the virtual obliteration of Poland, to that universal freedom, which, since the Napoleonic days, was known as a blessing yet to be? As already said, Chopin allowed these earth-clouds of sorrow to darken greatly the radiance of his ideal world. The pessimist could not sink himself in the deeper and wider optimist. We suspect his predilection for the gay and thoughtless dwellers on the surface of life, to be but desire to rid himself of a weight of sadness engendered by solitary musings.

The Sonata should be the outpouring of a heart attuned to every chord of life; a heart capable of universal sympathies. Nevertheless, the supreme expression of that heart is joy, a prophecy hopeful as a Christmas greeting to the world. Let us turn to a consideration of op. 35 in B flat minor, for there, as nowhere else, Chopin betrays the defects of his qualities.

The four vague introductory measures, "Grave," attempt the expression of unutterable woe whose painful fullness is yet relieved by this anguished cry. During the next four measures the soul, still overburdened, meditates a more adequate expression, and,

at the Agitato, again attempts its story in what proves but an interrupted and broken eloquence of grief whose poignancy soon softens to tender, sweet regret. This presently swells to passionate longing as for some far-off good. But alas for expectance! Alas for every looked-for happiness gilded by the sunlight of a day that shall not be! This last mood, so characteristic of Chopin, ends the first section of the first movement, and then suddenly but inevitably come back the old brooding and the tearful, sob-choked utterance. And now a calmer moment for, as from the Sun of all being, a ray of heaven-born cheer finds the darkened chambers of the heart; but whatsover of hope is there enkindled, is, by sorrow's unstayable fountain, soon made cold again.

In almost no one succeeding bar of the four movements comprised in this so-called Sonata, does a note of real joy leap forth from the funereal throng. Even the piu lento of the Scherzo seems to say, "Whatever we feel, let us be outwardly cheerful!" Ah yes! But then this outwardness misleads no observer, for the suffused eye betrays the smiling lips, and laughter is the adroit but ineffectual turning of a sigh.

The Presto was abhorrent to Mendelssohn. A normal, happy being, he was born into the sunshine and green of a happy world, and his heart had not been plowed and harrowed, and then planted with the black-berried nightshade and all the baneful things of death. So he

turned from this "Dark tarn of Auber" to the Chopin of meads and banks where no bird of midnight mood is croaking and the wholesome winds blow never from the "ghoul haunted woodland of Weir," and the lithe branches are waving æolian at eve.

In the Sonata op. 26 in A flat, Beethoven rightly placed amidst a contrasting environment the immortal "Marcia funebre sulla morte d'un Eroe." Amidst the almost unmitigated gloom of the B flat minor Sonata, Chopin has inserted a commemoration worthy of many heroes. But who were the heroes inspiring the Polish composer to one of his grandest thoughts, the unsurpassable Funeral March? Yes, who in truth were those dedicated heroes? Surely not the great achievers whom the wide world esteems, but rather those losing heroes hopeful in a hopeless cause; those fallen patriots of Polish blood whose mangled forms the iron hoofs of war had trampled in the mire of battle.

In the prevailing key of his Sonata, the key of B flat minor, one of the most sombre in all the realms of tone, Chopin's Funeral March at once reveals itself as no chapter of private sorrows; the mourning of a multitude is in its deep-voiced chords telling the burial of a people's loss. Fit for the final pageant of emperors and kings, yet little varied as the monotone of some grave discourse, the weighty measures move majesti-

cally and slow while everywhere bared heads are bending, and the dull, despondent look is downward for now the dust shall hide yon poor reminder of a vanished life. Ah, how those earth-bound chords, for less than two brief measures, struggle free and lift us on their glorious, upward wings! Alas, they falter ere yet they attain, and then, in feebler soaring, turn and sink exhausted to the very charnel place of Death. Once more with mighty final strength the massive chords are mounting only to falter and attempt and fall again even to the dismal housing of the dead. Then, suddenly unto that comfortless abode a song of heaven is wafted from her angel choir. At once complaining Doubt is dumb, and Sorrow hath her respite, and Hope her sweet uplooking to the rest of heroes from their finished days. Long afterward, when acute grief has changed to pensive musing, that song in tones of unforgettable beauty steals upon the silence of the soul; a tender message from the never-dying dead.

But whatever of balm in such serene outpouring, the torn heart must look for ease to Time the great healer, and so the deep wounds reopen, the insurmountable doubt and grief again are undergone, and in this wise the sublime march, so masterfully epitomizing certain human experiences, draws to its pathetic close and ends on the sombre chord which characterized its beginning.

IV

During this study of Frederic Chopin, the musician, certain incidents in his career, those favorably or unfavorably affecting his artistic development, have been touched on. Notable among them was his friendship with Liszt; but we have now to record the effects of another coming together, that of Chopin and George Sand. This latter was not the marriage of two minds musically preëminent, but, in fact, the result of the drawing near, until under one sky, of two related worlds: that of the musician, and that of the poet, for such, in fact, was the world of the imaginative French novelist. From this meeting and blending of abodes resulted a drama, and, for Chopin, a final tragedy; therefore a word in regard to the two distinguished actors.

Chopin's bodily appearance was marked by an entire absence of the robust; his features indicated delicate and refined feeling; his tastes were fastidious; his manner smooth and faultless with the last polish. This much created an impression as of a feminine personality, but the real, virile man was there, well-hidden beneath his mask. "George Sand," as that nom de plume would indicate, claimed for herself almost every masculine prerogative. With manly daring and physical vitality, she overleaped convention as but the walls

of a prison-pen fit only for the shutting in of little minds. And yet, before some noble and deep nature, a softest fire would mount to those dark eyes of hers, and voice and mien revealed the "Eternal Womanly," which often outlined and sometimes portrayed itself upon her most tender, soulful pages. From trustworthy accounts we conclude that Chopin was at first repelled, not by any physical lack, for Madame Dudevant had just and ample claims to comeliness, but rather from his inability to divine at once the basic affinity which afterwards drew and held him despite external dissimilarities. Not so with the great novelist to whose feminine insight much of the analytical, masculine mind was added. She at once divined Chopin, and whatever was defective in him the glamour of sex made good; so she desisted not until she had made him her own.

The beauty and symmetry and fragrance of the flower is the complete expression of a life simple because low in the scale of evolution; but the beauty and symmetry of the masculine human form, together with every endowment of the characteristic masculine mind, only half expresses the rounded whole of the complex human soul, itself sexless because above sex. What is true of man is equally so of woman. The man and the woman of genius each recognizes in the other the riches and worth of that hemisphere of the soul

adequately revealed only by that other. This perception of a mutual need is the prompter of love between men and women high in the scale of human evolution; it is in fact the cause of love even in the most unthinking; those whom only the wisdom of Nature enlightens.

Like Beethoven, who sighed for his "Immortal Beloved," Chopin himself had loved and more than once. That half of his being which, because a man, he failed to realize as an inward belonging, he had projected as an ideal clothed with the grace and beauty of womankind. That ideal had looked into his eyes with tender recognition, or a glance almost of scorn had wholly told his poor unworth. But, favoring or reproving, that ideal had vanished utterly and forever, and now his heart indeed was lone save in brief, exalted moments of genius. Then the soul in its entirety would assert itself, and amidst that fullness he needed no other company.

Chopin, now twenty-eight years of age, had reached the early maturity which hastens to the precocious genius into whose brief but brilliant years are crowded the doings of an ordinary lifetime. In subject matter, at least, he had from the first shown an originality almost unimpressed by any great contemporary or predecessor. Conscious of ability to stand alone, he shunned rather than sought the friendship of renowned composers and virtuosi. A tone poet most essential

to the romantic movement, he cared not for the Romanticism of Schumann. The eccentricities of Berlioz repelled him, and, strange in an admirer of Hummel and Field, he could not or would not condone what he deemed commonplace in the bulk of Mendelssohn's work. As for Liszt, to whose interpretation he accorded deserved praise, he had with secret disdain penetrated to the somewhat small kernel of original and worthy ideas in that author's early virtuoso pieces.

From this much, and more that might be added, it is evident that Chopin's glance was chiefly introspective. Moreover, it is evident that his inner world was not that of other musicians.

What then was the influence of George Sand upon our composer, now at the zenith of his powers? Evidently that of a projected ideal the image of the half of his soul life which Goethe calls the Eternal Feminine. In the searching light of our everyday world, the personality of George Sand betrays many defects. This of itself forbade a union like that of the Brownings; and to such a union other objections existed. The physical ailments of Chopin, which even in youth had menaced, and in a gradual approach had now seized upon him, were never wholly to loosen their grasp, so the chronic invalid became at times an exacting and by no means patient sufferer. On the

other hand, George Sand was a woman of wide outlook and varied interests. Certain chimeras in the guise of political and social reform were leading the temperamental novelist far afield; but in these matters the composer shared not her enthusiasm, neither would he be indoctrinated as she herself had been. Knowing where his strength lay, he remained faithful to his muse, his lavish endower. While Chopin sought the smiles of princesses, and the applause of the fashionable salon, the Sand remained aloof. Conscious of her superb mental equipment, she no doubt believed that the brightest of all that gay company could add not a single thought to her ever-overflowing store. No wonder that as time wore on our musician more and more failed to fulfill the requirements of her ideal.

The affair with De Musset should have warned Chopin, but what warning, what philosophy, what aceticism, could offset the fascinations of one who at will swayed the hearts of her immense public? Besides, Chopin was not a philosopher save that unconscious one which an analysis of his deepest tone-poems reveals. Still less was he an ascetic this highly-developed emotional nature, this virile yet frail man of genius.

Of Chopin it must be admitted that he remained true to his attachment, true despite indubitable proof of the other's infidelity; true even till the shut-

ting of the door wherewith eventually she barred her heart forever from his own ; true even then he remained, nursing in secret the sorrows of a bruised and broken life, while, from this episode in her own career, but the finale in that of her lover, the woman, like Faust and Wilhelm Meister, emerged into other and varied experiences.

But, to repeat our former question, what was the effect of George Sand on the ten years of productive effort which measured the beginning and the end of this affaire du cœur? We hold that effect the most important of everything extraneous on the body of our composer's works during that rich decade. Nevertheless that effect is not local; the finger cannot be placed upon it, nor is it determinable as a fixed quantity. Rather it is nourishment assimilated, chemically changed to blood and bloom and beauty by a process whereof genius alone has the secret.

Of the work of these memorable years it may well be said that, beneath their various dedications, the name of George Sand was written in the warm and ruddy life of the heart of Frederic Chopin. Had the novelist been another Clara Schumann rendering for the composer those great fortissimos, and those loud and brilliant passages to which his delicate physique was unequal, or even had Chopin himself been, like Liszt, a man of literary tastes and capabilities, how

much happier the outcome! How that mutual happiness, triumphing over the depressing power of a dread disease — as afterwards in the case of Heinrich Heine — would have infused a more luminous color into the prevailing sombreness of his tone poetry! But, thankful for our rich heritage, we grieve not over what might have been.

V

Because of the superabundance of producers in every department of art and literature, and because the actual needs of the world are small in proportion to the total output, a sifting results whereby is preserved only that most typical of its kind. Thus of a thousand melodies popular in their hour, one is added to a people's treasury of song. A stirring, national anthem, or a perfect poem of tender feeling or contagious flame, may alone preserve the memory of a prolific author. Much of what the world once deemed great in art, as in all else, has gone to the limbo of little things. Of the surprising bulk of poems which Byron at thirty-six left behind him, most of the "Childe Harold," displaying the range and fire of his yet undimmed imagination, and the freshness and amplitude of his characteristic, eloquent description, will live; but "Lara" and "Cain" and such must mingle with the trodden dust. So in the domain of music;

many old-time authors of supposed masterpieces are superceded by others of like calibre and claim. Only of him who in his department creates a new type, or perfects an old one, can anything approaching longevity be predicted.

To but one popular poet was it given to interpret in a hundred lyrics the heart of his peasant Scotland. To but one English dramatist to create for our sympathy Lear, Cordelia, Othello and Desdemona, and to evoke from his fecund brain the philosophical musings of Hamlet, the whimsical humor of Falstaff, the gossamer beauties of "Midsummer Night's Dream," and the terrible realism of Macbeth and Richard. To but one epic poet was it given to breathe a quickening breath into the pale shades of those mighty dead, Hector, Agamemnon, Achilles, and many an otherwise forgotten hero. To but one musician was it given to perfect in "The Well-tempered Clavichord" the great organ Fugue, to but one master of his art to show the attainable in those purely classical forms, the Symphony and the Sonata.

But what in a summary are the features of Chopin warranting his present vogue, and assuring his future fame? They are many, and each is an unimpeachable witness to his worth.

Prior to his day, Bach and Beethoven had explored the known world of harmony. They knew the geogra-

phy of its vast continents, the chorography of its countries, the topography of its mountains and valleys and plains. They had measured its waterways, had sounded its seas, had sailed by its limiting shores; and then Ludwig Spohr, suspecting other lands beyond the uncharted west, had ventured as from Gibraltar even to the Azores, or the Canaries, the Fortunate Islands of old. Schumann had gone even farther, but not to the utmost of daring for this was the deed of Chopin. He, the Columbus of composers, gave to Harmony a new world. He, and he alone, first dreamed and then beheld its isles of Paradise, tropic and enticing, embowered and restful, fit for lone and pensive musing till suddenly the sun is darkened, the winds make wail, and a dread note of thunder foretells the bursting storm. Many times a voyager, many times an explorer, he brought continually, for the world's wonder and delight, the fantastic, the weird, the exquisite. Ah! his was no haphazard sailing on the ocean of sound; no rudderless drifting with wind and tide! Every appliance of the skilled navigator, the quadrant, the sextant, the compass, were his guides. In day or in night he knew the altitude of the sun or else of the polar star. He had calculated to a nicety the deflections of the needle. Though seemingly lost was he on the limitless waves, latitude and longitude, to the fraction of a degree, were clear to his never-beclouded mind. He it was who opened the

way for all future discoverers and, inevitably, for rash and turbulent adventurers, even for Richard Strauss that Cortes, that Pizarro of them all.

An erudite originality, and the passionate abandon of the author of "Norma," characterize Chopin the melodist. In the new world by him discovered, his own before-mentioned world of the ideal, were birds of rare and differing plume, winged with the delicate greens of half-grown forest leaves, or breasted with the morn's red kindling ere the sun, or throated with the orange of the fading eve, or mottled with the melancholy grey which tells the night. And some there were a purity of white more spotless than the farthest, feathery cloud; and some whose tufty blue was borrowed from no sky like ours. Of these creatures of the composer's realm, each was vocal with the mood whereof his beauty was the symbol. Amidst the morning wood, one lifted to the sun a brief yet brilliant song of transport; another's notes were cadenced from beside the splash of shaded waterfalls when noon was burning all the fields. Another at the day's down-sinking breathed a tender plaint, or trembled forth a melancholy, sweet farewell; and when the round and tropic moon had touched the listening groves to silver, a rarer than the nightingale would warble from the branching palms.

These all were the teachers that made Chopin a melodist; but he was more than a melodist, more than

the harmonist we have indicated; he was a great, national tone-poet whose romantic measures characterized his Poland better than did the lines of her chiefest versifiers. The individuality of Chopin the composer was distinguishable as that of Beethoven and Wagner. He was above the mere perfector of types. His Scherzos, his Preludes, his Ballades, his Fantaisies are original conceptions. On the rhythm of the Polish dance he reared his dainty Mazurkas. Graceful and ethereal, they yielded like the slender pine to every swaying wind. Framed to endure, no blast could overthrow them. On the same national foundation uprose his Polonaises, an architecture of his own devising. Fantastic but not grotesque, uniquely and wholly expressive, those solid structures argued immovability, but the tempest proved them pliant and yet enduringly based as the deep-rooted giants of the wood.

The master of the mechanical difficulties of Bach and Clementi, must encounter others quite different in the Etudes of Chopin. The mind of such a one follows not swiftly the odd and rapid chromatics swarming through certain of them. His muscles tire in the midst of extended and unusual chords filling whole pages. His fingers, trained to anticipate conventional harmonic successions in the passage work, are here hindered by the unusual become the usual, the exception become the universal rule; and yet the musical

worth of these intractable measures, whose like abounds everywhere in Chopin, compels the pianist of our day to conquer them.

But, more important than the mechanical, there is in Chopin a mental technique peculiar to himself. It informed his playing with an ineffable charm which haunted the memory of pupils and listeners, and yet lives, a tradition of the old Paris days.

Unlike Shakespeare and Beethoven, the Pole was not privileged to sound the harp of universal life; therefore the universal note is denied him, and therefore his chief interpreters may not be chosen from the gifted of every nation. It cannot be denied that for the music of the vehement, unreasoning passion which in an instant transforms the shaft of love to the stiletto, the Italian temperament is alone adequate. It is acknowledged that for the rendition of the semi-barbaric native rhythms, the wild, lawless onrushings and the tearful, or dreamy, or voluptuous lingerings of Hungarian music, the blood of the Magyars must surge from the heart to the finger tips.

These examples prove that the mental technique of our composer, a matter of phrasing and pedaling and accent, and, most intangible of requirements, the Chopin rubato, is most easily and completely mastered by the Slav genius. Of the world's goodly company of virtuosi, only a few exponents of the Polish

musician wholly reveal his invaluable contributions to art.

In her own eyes the Amazonian Sand towered a genius in every way superior to the sickly and effeminate-mannered Chopin, but she attained not to the duty of a great novelist. No permanent types have sprung from her ambitious and busy pen. Those fretting, fuming, shadow-chasing Byronic heroes and heroines have lived their mortal days, and discriminating Time denies them an immortality vouchsafed the works of the man she abandoned.

Chopin's career as composer ends with the Sand affair. Of what followed little remains to be told. An unimportant visit to London and Edinburgh where broken health and spirits were serious obstacles to brilliant artistic success. A few friendships formed, a few old ones cemented, then back to Paris which first he entered a sojourner. Yes, back to Paris, the gay and frivolous and cynical Paris, that dances to the waiting grave and laughs and scoffs until the sad receiving of the tomb.

And now at last the untimely end. He who had blended the sheen of stars with the rainbow mist of waterfalls; he who had swung the forging hammer, and rivalled the delicate, meshy gold of Vulcan; he who had prisoned the loud thunder, the swift lightning, the angry, the plaintive, the whispering wind; he who had

outridden the ocean's fury, and slept on the polished breast of mountain lakes; he, the Endymion of melancholy groves beloved of Luna; he, the portrayer of battles dread with the doings of conquering foes, was himself to yield, leaving for our musical heritage the gloom and glory of his works.

Let us draw near, but not to the concert hall, and the applauding crowd greeting the advent of the young Polish virtuoso. Yes, let us draw near, but not to the dazzling salon and yonder listening group, the elite of fashion and culture and fame, gathered around the Erard. Let us draw nearer than these; nearer than the studio of the composer, and the wrapt company of the inner circle: Sand and Hiller and Heine and Meyerbeer and Delacroix and Liszt, who himself has described the scene. Ah, let us, with hushed hearts and noiseless foot-fall, approach and enter, for this is the place of parting where human angels neglect no ministration of love and soothing song as a finished life sinks, like the master's diminuendo, to waken and swell and rush and thunder, filled with the vigor of immortal day.

Far from the charm of English vales and meadows; far from the skylark and the cloud he saw and loved above their freshening green; afar from all the sweet allurements of his native isle he sleeps, the English Shelley, where the blue of Italy is bending o'er the

ruined olden, and the risen new whose ancient and eternal name is Rome. And close beside, where Winter spreads the flowers of northern June, is lying Adonais, poet wept in tearful poesy, the youthful Keats whom Beauty, in the guise of Death, drew to her own enamoured breast.

Walled from the covetous human waves, safe from the encroaching human tide, Père la Chaise, a mass of bloom and verdure, lies asleep while the Parisian metropolis roars and surges on. Of all the multitudes here gathered to the silence, one at least is alien for never a branch is moaning, never a breeze, for Polish liberty; and never a bird is inspired by such sad, sweet threnody; and never a strip of Polish sky, clear, or cloud-bedarkened, or heavy with the drops of sorrow, is bending o'er chiseled marble of a tomb. Amidst the dead of every high and noble calling, the dead whose deeds enhance the fame of France, that alien's dust is in the jealous keeping of a nation richer because of Poland and her greatest bard.

Sixty years have gone since the October day when, within the walls of the Madelaine, the master's funeral measures dirged his death. Since that memorable time many pianoforte composers, men of talent and men of genius, have arisen. These, by their indebtedness to the years of Chopin's productivity, prove him the one epoch-making composer for their instrument since

Beethoven, and the one probably without a successor in kind.

The certainty that the principal Sonatas of Beethoven, and the Ballades and other chief works of Chopin, overtop all else written for the piano, provokes the question, Which of these composers is foremost in this realm of music? The question at once lends itself to argument. Evidently Chopin abounds in technical difficulties unattempted by Beethoven, and these difficulties are a proof of worth because in fact the unusual but necessary conveyers of a message new to the musical world. It must be conceded that Chopin's daring chromaticisms, transitions and modulations are the inevitable expressions of a genius novel but not forced. Then again, Chopin wrote for the piano not as he found it, but with prophetic knowledge of its future possibilities; to the extent of all this he outrivals Beethoven.

It must not be supposed that harmonic complexity is of itself superior to broad and bold simplicity. This truth Handel well knew. He, the master of Fugue, with all contrapuntal devices at command, is renowned for a Doric beauty the despair of the Byzantine and the Rococo. As a harmonist, Beethoven felt not the urge of the unusual; the immense possibilities which he perceived in Bach were enough for his grand and stately measures. Taking from that unexhausted

mine, he cut and polished; then, brilliant on their every facet, he strewed the gems along his pages. Because of his many-sided excellence, we hold Beethoven a harmonist superior to Chopin, himself a delver in the Bachian mine. The music of Chopin is recognizable almost from the opening bar, but, as a creator and developer of characteristic themes, Beethoven is unequalled. While Chopin is one of the most inspired melodists, Beethoven sings himself more into the soul.

Although a solitaire, Beethoven was really a man of widest, deepest sympathies. Against his own bosom he felt the heart-beat of humanity, and, love-enlightened, he divined that heart, even its total meaning. The heaven-reaching heights of joy, and the black profound of woe, and every intermediate, throbbed contagious into his own breast. Therefore is he the universal man, interpreter of his own ideal world and interpreter of nations, while, on his human side, the intense Chopin is the epitome of Poland. That this universal man was not containable within the possibilities of the pianoforte, was plainly no fault of his; nevertheless, that much of the universal which informs the chief Sonatas of Beethoven, entitles them to supremacy over the greatest of the other.

As the second of pianoforte composers, what giants Chopin leaves in his rear! Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, Von Weber, Mendelssohn, Schumann, and behind

them many of lesser stature, Hummel, Clementi, Moscheles and such; and, still further back, the great average, the ephemeral multitude. Of all their pushing of pens, little will remain when, on some distant to-morrow, the stirred pulse and the suffused eye prove the tone-poems of the Polish musician an unfading charm, an undimmed worth, an eternal beauty, in the realms of art.

RICHARD STRAUSS AND THE ART OF SOUND

RICHARD STRAUSS AND THE ART OF SOUND

I

THE years now with us are prophetic of a century notable from its beginning; a century destined to achieve perhaps beyond our boldest imagining. Already is the century achieving, as, like a youthful but formidable being, it assaults that citadel of mystery wherein Truth must relinquish, one by one, her most valued and guarded possessions.

To the observant, the present is a time of shaken foundations, a time of much actual overthrow, and even a time of planning that broader and deeper bases shall well sustain the super-imposed new. Amidst an upheaval of things social, political, scientific, ethical and æsthetic; an upheaval world-wide, and necessarily sourced in the sub-strata of the world of causes; Art, for instance, is unavoidably disturbed throughout its various provinces.

Only the over-sanguine will assume that the better must needs rise from upheaval and overthrow. Therefore let us look but for the reasonable, for does not many a desolated province of this material world belie the theory of uninterrupted advance?

RICHARD STRAUSS

Appearances indicate that the art of music is entering upon a period the most momentous of its existence, a period of transition more radical than when it was emerging from the Greek modes; a period perhaps of storm and stress, of morbid and eccentric individualism; a period like that which almost overwhelmed literature in the early days of Goethe and Schiller; or, perhaps, a period of real progress; but, in either event, a period from which it will come forth an art far different from that of Bach, Beethoven, Chopin and Wagner.

Because progressive, the human mind will not regard its greatest work with a complacency inimical to further effort. Ever it fashions and re-fashions, achieving yesterday, failing to-day, and then more than retrieving on some fortunate morrow. Strange doings and sayings are rife in the musical world of the present. Denying the validity of fixed key, Claude Debussy begins and ends his tone creations anywhere within the limit of the chromatic scale. Max Reger teaches the intimate fellowship of the entire twenty-four keys, while Richard Strauss has well-nigh outgrown the twelve semitones of our time-honored gamut which must be enlarged if it would meet the needs of his successors. It is the opinion of many that, in this event, the art of music will be merged in what we shall here call the art of sound. Concerning this realistic art, this art to be, let us explain briefly that, whereas

the word sound signifies all that the ear cognizes, whether as euphony, cacophony or mere noise, yet, for sound to attain to the status of an art, art must endow with definite and adequate purpose not only euphony, but also every other sound, including mere noise.

While Strauss with almost audacious boldness is leading toward the enharmonic possibilities of an augmented scale, the more conservative but no less ingenious Reger is looking back to his beloved Bach, and showing what, through a greatly extended key relationship, that master might have accomplished with the good old semitones. Eschewing programme music, and all else demanding literary elucidation, Reger will, to the tone-poems of his rival, offset a fugue or a sonata ultra enough for any save the disciples of Strauss and Debussy.

Like Strauss, Debussy is in no wise to be ignored, but always and wholly to be reckoned with in an estimate of advanced methods. Paradoxical at first thought is the fact that Debussy, whose measures abound in unresolved discords of ultra-modern origin, should found his music not uniformly on the major and the minor scales, but, by preference, largely on the old church modes. This reversion to the mediæval indicates a period of crisis wherein the beam fluctuates between the extremes of old and new tonal methods. Dispensing with the size and blare of the modern orchestra,

and shunning, as if an obsession, the Wagnerian models, Debussy will not for one brief moment permit in the lyric drama such outbursts of vocal melody as crown the climaxes of "Lohengrin," and the passionate love scenes of "Tannhäuser." And this for the specific reason that "Melody is almost anti-lyric, and powerless to express the constant change of emotional life. Melody is suitable only for the song which confirms a fixed sentiment."

While Strauss is held to be the lineal successor of Liszt, he is in fact a compound of various modern tendencies. In him we find the philosophy of Nietzsche, the impressionism of Manet, and the realism of which De Maupassant and Zola and Whitman and the youthful Swinburne were exponents; a realism which, because it over-emphasizes the erotic, the pathological, and the ugly, misinterprets man and nature, and so betrays the characteristics of decadent art.

What would have been the attitude of Wagner toward Strauss may be inferred from his caustic attacks on Berlioz whose music he called foolish and eccentric; and yet, as a producer of novel effects he himself was much indebted to the French composer, and, in turn, was no small factor in the formation of one whom Strauss' disciples deem the greater Richard. Notwithstanding which, we affirm that Strauss is more closely related to Liszt whose talents, both in pianoforte and orches-

tral composition, tended to virtuoso display more than to the utterance of original and lofty ideas.

Prior to the advent of Wagner, the musical composer deemed it necessary always to appeal to the sense of the beautiful. Whatever his theme, his music, ever conforming to the established laws of harmony, must not be repugnant to that æsthetic sense. At times he no doubt overstepped his self-imposed limit, but, somehow, the ear of the listener has accustomed itself to the innovation, and with the result that not a few wholly doubt the existence of a line of cleavage between the ugly and the beautiful. However, a sane philosophy will demonstrate that beauty and ugliness are as unlike as are good and evil.

Neither the painter nor the sculptor restricts himself to pleasing subjects; the grotesque and the horrible have been deemed not unworthy the brush and the chisel of artists indubitably great, and it can be argued that to music should be accorded an expression free and faithful as that allowed to painting and the plastic arts. On the other hand, popular opinion has ever been, and perhaps ever will be, that what is actually ugly is not music. To this opinion the modern reply is that the word music carries with it far too restricted a meaning; the office of the tonal art, like that of all other arts, is to express not the half but the whole of life; in fact, the universal duality in nature and in man.

With deep philosophic and artistic insight, Wagner elaborated an art destined, as he believed, to supercede Italian Opera. Despite his harsh but convincing strictures, and despite the theories and practice of Debussy who holds that in the Music Drama the vocal parts, lest they hinder the dramatic action, should be reduced to a rythmic chant devoid of melody, Italian Opera survives; from temporary eclipse it is emerging bright as before. In the life labors of the great reformer, we are beginning to see simply a new school supplementing the old. We are beginning to see that the denouncer of Donizetti and Rossini and Verdi and Bellini and the rest, was himself not quite faultless in practice, however correct in theory. Musicians of eminence now admit that the incongruities of Italian Opera are offset by the over-long and the slow-moving in the Wagnerian Music Drama. Naturally the world refuses to forget "Lucia" and "Il Barbiere" and "Rigoletto" and "Norma," and in fact any work whereinto the muse of Italy has poured her quenchless fire.

Granting that the faulty and inadequate Greek modes had so cramped and chilled musical expression that, in their abandonment, little of value was lost to the musicians of past centuries, what shall be said of our modern musical heritage, the gift of the last two hundred years, and which the universal adoption of a

new and enlarged musical scale would render obsolete? Will not that spirit of love and loyalty which defends the cause of Italian Opera, make determined stand against the novel system? From the twelve notes of the chromatic scale the great German masters have evoked the superlatively beautiful. Shaping their imaginings to lofty ideals, they have in fact epitomized the larger, better part of man and nature, as understood by the German mind. Admitting this, can the cultured musician bring himself to ignore the past of German art? for this he must needs do under an exclusively modern regime. No! a thousand times no! That for music a different scale can be no more than supplimentary is indicated by the history of all other æsthetic arts. Their every worthy type endures; not any one has quite eclipsed another.

The two leading races, once peopling the southmost peninsulas of Europe, were extinct centuries ago, but their daily tongues survive, dead languages never while endures the world, for they bring to all enlightened peoples the period and climax of the orator, the meter of the tragic dramatist, and the notes of the Homeric and the Virgilian muse, fresh and unrivalled as when Greece and Italy first lent ear.

There have been schools of architecture, both Pagan and Christian, schools of sculpture from Phidias onward; schools of modern painting since the mature

work of Giotto; and the wise ages, far from selecting and excluding, have preserved them all.

To men of creative genius were granted glimpses of Truth; each from his own angle beheld the ineffable vision. Through the sundered veils of illusion, as through the storm's momentary rift, the permitted artist beheld his own ruling star, sometimes a royal sun, sometimes a subordinite planet, but always one without which the hierarchy of heaven were incomplete.

That neither the school of Wagner nor that of Strauss will supersede existing national schools is assured for the additional reason that these are the outcome of national ideals. In every race of civilization the man of creative genius proves his people to be possessed of ideals of art peculiarly their own. There results for example the Slavic, the Scandinavian, the English, the German, the Spanish, the French, the Italian ideals, and, lofty in possibilities, that of the amalgamating race destined to fill this ample western land of ours.

The ideals of tonal art! Surely the Wagnerian and the Straussian models cannot include them all! Varied as the geography of the globe, as the configurations of its surface, those national ideals are sombre with the solitude of barren steppes; they are gloomy with the twilight of deep-indenting fjords; they are rich with the ancient, the mediæval, the modern, of a land of

memories gathered since the coming of Arthur. Otherwhere they are fraught with the romance of Rhenish castles where Minnesingers and Meistersingers have proved the magic power of song; or else they bring the southern night of castinets and tripping feet, and the moonlit wonder of Moorish Alhambra. How well those ideals have embodied the gay and the graceful, also the volatile as the vintage of vine-clad Champagne! And how fitly are they born by Adriatic and Mediterranean shores where the ardent day-beam warms the heart to love's emotion; and, in days to come, shall they not suggest the amplitude of snowy mountain chains, the undulating sweep of prairies, the breezy expanse of vast inland seas, and the eternal dash and roar of ocean on our eastern and our western coasts?

These, and countless other ideals sourced in the world's composite life, have given rise to a necessarily varied art whose inner unity must remain undiscovered till mankind becomes one great family, bound by a community of ideals and interests in the millennial dawn of a yet-unrisen day.

II

The belief that for them only is the pure and high vision of Truth, and that the world should look with their eyes and abide by their interpretation, is the folly of many of the wisest reformers. Over-enthusiasm

inflames the minds of such, and disturbs their sanity of judgment. The reformer in art is usually a philosopher pledged to some system into which, as into a mould, he pours at fluid heat his artistic imaginings. Because no system of philosophy yet elaborated finds general acceptance, or because, as Schopenhauer intimates, one discovers in any philosophy only what his capacity permits, our reformer will appeal chiefly to those whose minds are akin to his own.

For the comprehension of Beethoven and his great predecessors, little more than a trained ear is necessary; but, for the comprehension of our latest composers, one must habituate himself to abstruse metaphysical thinking. To endorse Wagner, both wholly and understandingly, one should assent to Schopenhauer's theory of music. To endorse in like manner the attitude of Strauss, one should assent to the "Super Man" of Nietzsche, and his crowning qualities "evolved good and evolved evil."

If, as Whitman says, perfect sanity characterizes the master among philosophers, how can more than a cult accept that topsy-turvy of ethical values, that quack mixture of Scientific Materialism and Comtism run mad, the system of Nietzsche? It is probably that but for his "Beyond Good and Evil," Strauss, the foremost exponent of musical ultraism, would have hesitated at more than half-way measures.

In the morning, ere he attempted creative work, Wagner was wont to say, "If we could keep our hearts pure this day, untainted and untempted by the false values of the world, what visions of Infinity itself were possible to us!"

Surely the heart, indispensable to the creation of a masterpiece of art, cannot be stimulated by a philosophy brutal because without pity; a philosophy shallow because ignorant of the essential nature and ultimate end of what it deems mere weakness; a philosophy which would crush that symbol of weakness, the falling sparrow, and quench all love for the neighbor if in him appear no promise of "Super Man." Now who is this "Super Man," this ideal of Nietzsche and his tonal interpreter? Is he not a being fashioned much after the model of what the race no more desires, to wit, the outworn gods of Greece and Rome? Is he not an ideal compounded of mutually destructive qualities?

Because of the serious shortcomings we have indicated, and because of others which will be pointed out, the art of Strauss may never reach the highest levels; his chief office as composer, like that of Whitman as poet, may be to explore a domain wherein the superlative genius of the future is to expand his ample powers. That genius, and in our opinion he only, can reveal the legitimate possibilities of sound. In his tonal creations the cacophonious, as well as the euphonious,

must be employed in such way that every mood of man and every shade of human feeling shall be faithfully portrayed, and the world itself epitomized. His must be a sane equipoise, an unfailing sense of fitness, the consummate ability to adjust to a nicety, so that always the end justifies the means. Already his predecessors in the great acknowledged schools have developed the art of euphony. It will be his even more difficult and exacting task to develop the art of cacophony, and fuse the two in such way that they over-picture not the totality of man and nature.

Notwithstanding Wagner's belief that instrumental music could not further develop unless fused with the sister arts of poetry, painting and dramatic action, the modern outlook discovers in the art of sound almost limitless possibilities as yet unrealized; but, judging from the past, the stupendous tonal edifice created by the coming master will not overshadow the erections of composers from Bach to Wagner.

Still the divine Mozart will turn us to the never-to-be depised beauty of form chaste and classic. Still Beethoven's temple of music will reveal that form's complete and glorious development and crowning. Still at heaven's very gate will Schubert, spontaneous and impassional lark, outpour the melody he learned beneath that temple's overhanging roof, or else in the sacred limits of its inmost court.

Always we shall have with us those who in the name of progress turn the back on whatever is behind. Ignoring Aristotle's profound dictum that the real test of art is not originality, but its truth to the universal, these no doubt will ridicule as immature attempts, necessary to the adolescence of art, all that is greatest in German and Italian music. In addition to these we shall have that class of temperamental individuals who, from the extravagant and bizarre, derive that thrill of rapture which they mistake for appreciation: however, these fickle followers of fads and fashions cannot be reckoned among the adherents of legitimate art. Now as to the public, the great overwhelming body of the people; can they be educated to enjoy the new art of sound? Will they not refuse, aye, obstinately refuse to appreciate cacophony however judiciously employed? A difficult question this unless one remembers that, as the race advances, the foremost, coming into new vistas of Truth, bequeath to those next in line, and so on to the very rear, their own rare and high discovery.

In the comprehensive art of sound, the euphonious epitomizes the major, better half of man and nature. From this it appears that the cacophonious must epitomize the minor, baser half. Why, heretofore, was this half well-nigh denied tonal utterance? Was it not largely from the old and inadequate theological con-

ception which made the existence of evil an abortion of the Divine plan?

Conceding the answer implied, and granting that the attitude of the time is one of invitation, let us consider certain factors necessary to the realization of the art of sound.

Orchestral music and orchestral accompaniment, as understood by Bach and Handel, betray a paucity of resource and a lack of color then inevitable. Since that era of small beginnings, and in late years especially, orchestral instruments both numerous and valuable have been invented, and the capacity of brass and wood-wind much enlarged and their quality greatly improved. Desirous of utilizing to the utmost all additions and improvements, orchestral composers sought effects the most novel both in solo and in symphony. As result the orchestra grew from infantile to gigantic proportions and capabilities. Thus was produced a full, flexible and characteristic means of expression, one peculiarly suited to the speculating and philosophizing musician who, already due and now appearing, added his contributions to those productive of a rounded art.

In examining the factors which make for Strauss and his works, we shall find that his native originality could never have raised him to what he is, and that the art of sound would still be an undiscovered one,

had not Chopin already exemplified, most eloquently, the flexibility of the laws of chromatic progression, and had not Wagner, that great emancipator, stricken from musical form the cramping bonds of a narrow convention.

If, as we contend, the minor half of dual man and nature has legitimate place in all art, then let the musician beware lest, as final impression, he make evil seductive, and so identify himself with decadence as have those who denounce in every form of art any purpose consciously moral; those in fact who announce as their dictum, "Art for art's sake." When for specific ends the musician weaves around evil a flowery spell, he somehow should make us feel that death and corruption lurk in every petal of those all-too-enticing blooms.

Moreover, when by means of cacophony he lays bare the true nature of evil, he should avoid an excess which would identify him with the moral pervert whose delight is in the abnormal. Let him understand that in this world's great school where, only amidst the lure of opposites, character can be formed and wisdom gained, the true office of evil and the secret of its permission is that eventually its inner hideousness will turn from itself, forever, those who, through ignorance of the essential nature of evil, have yielded to its manifold seductions.

Of all arts, music is accredited to be the highest and purest. The supreme art of the beautiful, it rests on a mathematical basis. Its notes and intervals and chords progress in compliance with defined, or at least definable laws corresponding to the great laws which, moving with mathematical precision, brought order from chaos and so created the world. Concerning the art of sound, this problem confronts us; what are the laws if any which govern the ugly? Or, to put it differently, to what extent does the ugliness of evil correspond to chaotic conditions?

If what the composer would depict is not governed by mathematical law, then is he warranted in the use of unresolved and unresolvable dissonances. Judged by this rule, Debussy has perhaps so transgressed that a wiser generation will pronounce his efforts to be a passing phase of æstheticism. But the difficulty of determining just what is, or is not governed by mathematical law, must lead to a deal of error ere we attain the true art of sound.

To illustrate the vast unlikeness of method in the descriptive instrumental works of the classical and those of the ultra-modern school, two examples will suffice. The representation of Chaos in Haydn's "Creation," gave to the composer full opportunity for every liberty of harmony and form tolerated in his time. Now, while a rather frequent use of the diminished seventh

chord lends to this composition somewhat of needed vagueness, still there are no modulations to distant keys, no abrupt transitions, no unresolved or unresolvable discords, no consecutive perfect fifths, and, in fact, there is nothing in the chord progression which the critic of to-day would deem daring or even unusual for, always and wholly, the harmonic scheme conforms to conventional rules. Here and there is somewhat of concession to established musical form, for, in this picture of Chaos, the employment of anything radical either in form or harmony, would have provoked censure the very harshest and even have proved the author guilty of the unpardonable sin of producing what could never be called music.

With this attempted realism of Haydn, compare now that portion of "Don Quixote" wherein Strauss delineates the gradual and complete disordering of the mind of Cervantes' hero. Wholly sure of his novel method, one, by the way, peculiarly adapted to the subject, Strauss avails himself of every conceivable liberty of tone and form. Euphony and cacophony mix in an astounding realism, while the rational sequence of sanctioned form gives way to the illogical and wholly fantastic, in fact the chaos of dethroned reason.

III

The subject of long experiment, Music, as we know it, at length emerged from the centuries, virtually a modern art. The fate of its founders and their followers for long after, is that the names of these are wellnigh forgotten, and their works are heard no more. Because of them the later comers have survived rich through inheritance, but perhaps no richer by nature.

Again has music reached the experimental stage. Sweeping upward in mighty spiral, and so conforming to creation's universal trend, now, at a point of departure overlooking the old, it finds inadequate that result of compromise, the diatonic scale. It faces the problem of tonality and those modern questions which a higher, wider outlook brings to view.

In estimating the value and longevity of Strauss' art, let us remember that the ancient experimenters in music evolved no definite types as Nature in her domain has done. Half-formed, their pale and bloodless attempts have perished from sheer lack of vitality. On the other hand, the tone-dramas of our most modern virtuoso are anything but anæmic; an all-too-turbulent flood rushes through their every vein. So much is Strauss a product of his time that the characteristics now placing him in the forefront would have little availed him in an age believing with Schumann that

Harmony is king and Melody queen in the composer's realm.

Were Strauss endowed with a lyric gift comparable to that of Schubert, probably he would be impelled to exercise that gift almost within the compass of convention. Were he, like Handel, able to accomplish the majestic and the magical without recourse to chromatic progression, the bizarre would lead him less far afield. Again, were he capable of a kingdom like that wherein Beethoven, reigning by divine right, reigned supreme, surely he would not have sought the seemingly unfruitful wastes, the perhaps barren Saharas of sound. Deficient in the crowning qualities of these masters, but not deficient in genius, he imagined, and actually undertook with ardor, that of which they could never have dreamed.

Having accredited Strauss with genius, though of a peculiar sort, we are led, for the better understanding of this master, to ask, what is genius? To this query the wisdom of all ages has given various answers. According to Plato, a genius is one whose vision of Beauty, Truth, and Good, existing in the Divine Mind, is clearer than that of other men. Therefore genius does not actually originate. Its office is to translate, to reproduce the great originals, the eternal archetypes of the super-mundane world. Because of his high vision the artist reproduces Beauty, the philosopher

Truth, while the saint, enamoured of Good, both teaches and practices it.

Granting this, we are at once led to ask, why the penetrating vision of genius? To this query a brief answer is that because the possibilities either latent or unfolding in man are immeasurable as the universe itself, therefore that which men are pleased to call genius is but the foreshowing of what the race as a whole shall attain to, but, in the present stage of human progress, genius is in fact a rare exception to Nature's slow and thorough methods. Nevertheless, the price of its defiance of the universal law must be paid by genius, and that price is unsymmetrical development.

Because of unsymmetrical development, genius may at times produce what, to the average normal being, would seem the work of a degenerate mind; but in estimating Strauss it should be considered that the tonal interpreter of Don Quixote can often be sanely logical, and even wholly conventional.

The genius of Strauss, like that of Whitman, is essentially the genius of the explorer. Each of these burned to reach the limits of his art and plant victorious feet upon the pole. As in the material world, so here, such daring spirits are necessary if we would know the geography of the world of tone. To our old musical possessions, Strauss has joined a vast and as yet vague territory much of which, while of little pres-

ent value, may yet develop unexpected and perhaps indispensable uses.

It argues against the real sanity of Strauss' art as a whole, that, for the exercise of his gifts, he chooses Oscar Wilde's version of the story of Salomé, a version in which the central theme is a monstrous and revolting passion unmatchable in actual life, and even unthinkable except by the sexual pervert. Also, it is ominous that Strauss undertakes the tonal treatment of the brilliantly written but illogical work, "Thus spake Zarathustra;" a work wherein is discovered the philosopher Neitzsche's ideal, the earth-shaping, earth-dominating man to be, a proud, unconcerned, scornful, violent, and fear-inspiring personage beloved of Wisdom the goddess woman that loves the warrior only. In this "Super Man" evolved evil and evolved good are necessary. Free from gods, and every adoration save that of self, he rises over unnumbered small folk and timorous weaklings, and that protection artfully invented for them by the Christian Church, "Slave Morality;" and so he attains his goal, "Master Morality," that which, to all but the mind of the moral pervert, is the morality of the tyrant whose will none dares gainsay.

We have already contended that the wide departure of Strauss was natural and necessary to a genius lacking in certain gifts indispensable to the older schools;

also we have accredited him with being a compound of various tendencies essentially modern. It may with assurance be affirmed that the art of sound could have originated only in a time like our own, a time whose methods are well illustrated by the attitude of certain of our modern novelists.

Having proved to themselves and their following the correctness of the new methods, and the falsity of the old, these have largely abandoned plot and incident, and devoted their talents to psychology. Now while it is incontestable that Walter Scott could by no means have brought to the trivial and the commonplace the analytical mind of Henry James, still we venture that the world has lost nothing because of this. The poor plodding world looks downward; so its eyes must again and again be diverted from the trivial and the commonplace, and lifted toward an ideal which, even if overdrawn, is immeasurably better than none.

While preferring to grope in the dark regions of the abnormal, the art of Strauss, the art of the modern psychologist has, as one might expect, often treated the trivial and the commonplace. Besides it is evident that neither in Salomé nor in "Thus spake Zarathustra" has it given to the world a normal ideal. With the great masters of the past it was always an ideal, the noblest within the range of their inspired vision. To Haydn it was the terrestrial Eden yet

undarkened by the Fall. To Handel it was the Greater Adam, and His coming long foretold. To Bach it was Gethsemane, and its immortal, crowning passion of sorrow. To Mendelssohn it was the prophet and the saint those rich flowerings of his ancient race. To Wagner it was the eternal womanly prompting to noblest deeds of devotion and self-sacrifice.

With men like these, the presentation of high moral ideals resulted from intuitive knowledge that the perpetuity of mankind, as something nobler than the brute kingdom, depends upon acceptance of these ideals, and therefore any so-called masterpiece which brings about confusion of ideals, would render the real purpose of art abortive.

The music of such masters as Haydn and Mozart voices the pure emotions spontaneous in the breast of man. God-given emotions, never to be quenched, they will burst into utterance while throbs the human heart. The evolution of music, as of all art, accords with the evolution of man from a creature of primal impulses to one of a thousand involved emotions and interests. The latest methods of Strauss are fraught with peculiar peril to his art, as an epitome of life, in that a well-nigh exclusive use of obscure and chromatic harmonies is restricting that art to an expression of complex emotions only. Now, while through no composer however gifted can music revert to the prevailing sim-

plicity of Handel, still, whatever its evolution, it must as an epitome of life, have moments of native and simple emotion. Therefore it was a sane and saving reaction which turned the efforts of Strauss from the abnormal to the smaller, more subdued models of the song writer, and also to that wholesome and human idyl, the Enoch Arden of Tennyson.

As an orchestral writer, Strauss has gathered to himself the technical knowledge of Berlioz, Liszt, and Wagner. Having enlarged his resources through original discovery, he dazzles by display of a virtuosity wholly unprecedented. Technically he is fully equipped for exploration; and thus he is pushing on into that new hemisphere the realm of sound.

In our exposition we have endeavored to point out certain tendencies in the work of Strauss, tendencies which endanger realism in every art whatsoever, tendencies which we believe are turning Strauss from full and sane achievement, and so from his prospective goal the art of sound. That such an art is legitimate and actually within sight we have endeavored to show, as also the certainty that, once our possession, it will supplement and not supercede its predecessors. Failing to find in Strauss the lofty personage his worshippers deem him to be, we nevertheless have accredited him with real though peculiar genius, and this is but justice due. Living in a transition period largely

of his own bringing about, he has produced both the unquestioned and the problematical. But that problematical can be ignored or forgotten no more than the problematical of Whitman. At very least, it will survive as a curiosity of tonal art.

In his theoretical writings on the opera and the drama, Wagner likens music to the soulless nymph, a real woman only through the love of some man. Poetry, to Wagner, is that masculine endowing music with an immortal part. This novel finding of the poet-musician is but the outcome of a theory; an outcome which the patent facts easily and wholly refute. Instrumental music when treated by a virile master, like Wagner himself, can be masculine enough, while, in the hands of a versifier gifted chiefly with grace and smoothness, Poetry, the masculine art so called, becomes weakly feminine, or even a characterless thing not attaining to sex.

Wagner's theories are founded on a philosophy essentially of Eastern origin, but, had he looked deeper, our speculator would have discovered that Eastern philosophy considers sex to be but an outward manifestation incident to the present stage of world evolution. The human soul, and also the soul of every art, contains within itself the potentiality of both male and female. Sex in the physical world is lack of equilibrium, the temporary preponderance in the soul of

specific male or female characteristics outwardly exhibited, but, in the mental world, the offspring of highest genius would attain an equilibrium superior to distinction of sex.

In art, as in man its author, the masculine, untempered by the feminine, becomes not wisely masterful, but harsh and brutal; hence the peril of Strauss. The feminine, untempered by the masculine, becomes not intuitive, but weakly capricious and wholly illogical; hence the peril of Debussy. The great authors, whichever their sex, have produced works wherein specific male and female characteristics modify one another.

This view of sex in art makes for the validity of instrumental music as such, and reënforces the position of Strauss when, in his wholly instrumental tone poems, he would delineate every phase of life, and even certain phases of philosophic thought as Wagner, despite theory, has done in his "Faust Overture."

Owing to the increasing vogue of Strauss, no prophet is necessary to foretell a rank growth of imitators. These, because barren of originality, will succeed in copying the eccentricities rather than the merits of their model. What infliction, what torture to human ears will result from the inevitable Bedlam of noise and fury, the near future must reveal. But let us believe that a modicum of pity and saving common

sense, in even the most cruel devotee of such a school, will insure speedy reaction toward saner and more satisfying methods.

While ignoring not its old estate, music is moving from its centre in the emotional nature, to a stronghold well within the intellectual life. Failures and wanderings indeed must be, but stagnation never in this onward world. So, looking to desired fulfillment, let us prophesy of music such rise as that of man from his emotional, half-formed self toward an ideal not coldly intellectual, but always warmly and nobly human with what the future foreshadows, namely, the balanced blending of emotion and mind, the ideal of both man and his artistic creations, in fact, the ideal of ideals in whose very anticipation is forgotten the "Super Man" of Nieztsche.

14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED

MUSIC LIBRARY

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or on the date to which renewed.
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

NOV 1 1 1959
RECD MUS

OCT 30 1963

MAY 31 1966

MAR 8 - 1972

MAR 11 1980

JUN 20 1983

LD 21–100m-6,'56
(B9311s10)476

General Library
University of California
Berkeley

DATE DUE

Music Library
University of California at
Berkeley

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

ML390.F3
-
-
C037083621

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES
C037083621